DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 231 328 IR 010 725

AUTHOR	Corder-Bolz, Charles R.
TITLE	Family Educational Use of Television. Final Report. Revised.
INSTITUTION	Southwest Educational Development Lab., Austin, Tex.
SPONS AGENCY	National Inst. of Education (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	Dec 82
NOTE	176p.; For related document, see ED 222 194.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research/Technical (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC08 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adolescents; *Broadcast Television; Children; Educational Television; *Family Life; Interviews; Observation; *Parent Role; Questionnaires; *Research Methodology; Television Research; *Television Viewing; *Use Studies

ABSTRACT

Using a new telephone-observation methodology which permitted low-cost observation of home television viewing behaviors, this study examined how families use home television, parental involvement in their children's television viewing, and families' educational use of home television. Following initial calls to 2,922 household phones, a total of 490 families with school-age children at home were identified. Findings indicate that in families with young children, parents view television with their children about half of the time during evening hours; however, family conversations concerning the viewing occur only about 10% of the time. Only about 8% of the families studied watch television programs for educational purposes, and more than half of the parents do not think their children learn from television programs. Family parameters, home environment, child parameters (e.g., age) appear to influence family usage of television, while the number of parents present in the family does not. Appendices to this report include data gathering instruments, 1981 spring telephone survey results, and tables displaying results of special analyses of the data. (LMM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED231328

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

Family Educational Use of Television
Final Report FY 1981

by

Charles R. Corder-Bolz

Submitted to:

National Institute of Education
Washington, D. C.

Submitted by:

Southwest Educational Development Laboratory
211 East Seventh Street
Austin, Texas 78701

August 1981
Revised September 1981
Revised January 1982
Revised December 1982

IR010725

ABSTRACT

American children spend more of their waking hours watching television than in any other activity. Television viewing is the predominant family activity. A large number of studies have generated evidence that children learn and mis-learn much from television. Television has become one of the prime educational resources. In controlled studies, the evidence indicates that parents' involvement in their children's television viewing is the critical element determining the education benefits of children's television viewing experiences. However, little is known about family television viewing behaviors in the home. Virtually all of the available data were acquired through self-report studies. Since most television viewing behaviors are out of awareness, self-report data are suspect and often have been found to be contradictory. A new telephone-observation methodology was developed that permitted reasonably accurate observation of television viewing behaviors in the home at a low cost and which is compatible with sophisticated sampling techniques.

A total of 2,922 household phones were called. Excluding households not at home or refusing to participate, 1,298 households provided information in the study. A total of 490 households were families with school-age children at home.

The study provided important insights into how families use home television, parental involvement in their children's television viewing, and families' educational use of home television. In general, it was found that in families with young children, parents viewed television with their children about half of the time during evening hours. However, family conversations about the television program occurred only about 10% of the time. Further,

only about 8% of families with young children watched a television program for educational purposes, and more than half of the parents did not think their children learn from television programs.

It was hypothesized that family parameters would influence family use of television. Although there may be distortions in the data from the sub-sample of families with young children, the data do indicate that Mexican American parents view television with their children less frequently than do Anglo or black parents. Further, family conversations while viewing television are much less frequent in Mexican American families. There appears to be no substantial differences in the proportion of Anglo, black, and Mexican American families viewing television programs for educational purposes. Though, black parents are more skeptical that their children learn from television programs.

The general environment of the family appears to influence families' use of television. For particular, families in rural settings appear to be less likely to have family conversations about a television program, and much less likely to watch television for educational purposes. Finally, fewer parents in rural families believe their children learn from television.

It was thought that the number of parents present in the family would greatly alter the family's use of home television; however, the data do not support this hypothesis. While single parents are much more likely to view television with their children, there are no dramatic differences between single-parent and two-parent families in the areas of family conversations while viewing television, reasons for watching television, or parental belief that their children learn from television.

The second hypothesis was that child parameters would affect television viewing behaviors. The data indicate that in families with high-school-age children, there is less frequent parent-child co-viewing of television, fewer family conversations about television programs, less frequent television viewing for educational purposes, and less belief that children learn from television programs than in families with grade-school-age children.

The third hypothesis was that parental involvement would influence the educational benefits of children's television viewing. The data appear to indicate that in families where parents co-view with their children more frequently, there are more parent-child conversations about television programs, more television viewing for educational purposes, and a greater belief that children learn from television programs.

The overall picture of family television viewing, however, is that while television viewing is a dominant, if not almost a constant, family activity for most families with children during most evenings, television viewing is not a joint activity in that family conversations about television are rare events, television viewing is not planned, program selection is not a family decision, and television viewing itself is an inexpensive and easy way to fill the evening hours. Further, the overwhelming proportion of parents do not believe that children learn from television.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

page

Statement of Purpose 1

Scope.. 4

Review of Relevant Literature............................ 5

    Children Mis-Learning from Television................. 7
    Educational Use of Television......................... 9
        Viewing educational programs...................... 9
        Viewing informative programs...................... 10
        Evaluating all TV programming..................... 10
        Special educational uses of television............ 10
    Families' Educational Use of Television............... 11
    Parental Involvement.................................. 12
    Parental Mediation.................................... 14
    Television and Parenting.............................. 18
    Models of Family Use of Television.................... 20

Research Hypotheses...................................... 24
    Family Parameters..................................... 24
    Child Parameters...................................... 24
    Parental Involvement.................................. 25

Methodology.. 26

Procedures... 32
    Pilot Study... 32
    Study of Families' Educational Use of Television...... 34
        Variables... 34
        Sample.. 35
        Instruments....................................... 36
        Sampling Procedure................................ 38

Results.. 39

Discussion... 52

Conclusions.. 57

Availability of Data..................................... 62

References... 63

APPENDIX A: Telephone Observation and Questionnaire Forms 69

APPENDIX B: 1981 Spring Telephone Study Results 76

APPENDIX C: First Special Analysis Tables 123

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The critical issue of children educationally benefiting from television programming appears to involve the extent and nature of parental involvement, especially parental commentary and mediation of programming content. Several studies have provided strong evidence that parental involvement is the determining factor. While the evidence indicates that parents can help their children to learn from TV, very little is known regarding how often and in what ways parents do attempt to make their children's TV viewing educational.

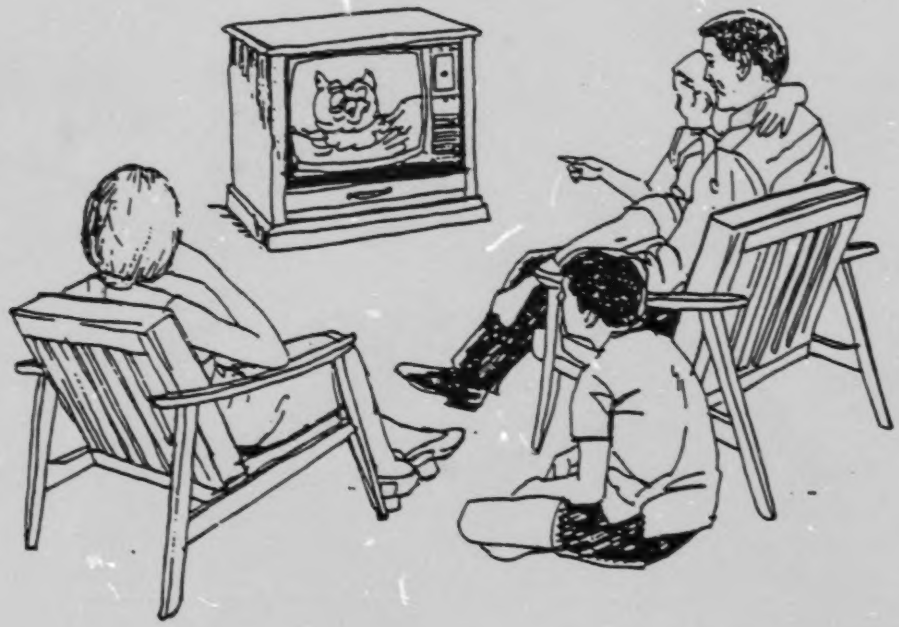
Television and parental involvement is a particularly critical issue for most contemporary families. Television has become a primary educational resource for most students. For a society which relies upon an educated and informed public, it is becoming increasingly imperative that children and families utilize television as an education resource (Corder-Bolz, 1980). It is now evident that there is an important need to understand how families use television and then to develop strategies for encouraging more educational utilization of television.

This study was designed and conducted to provide information on a variety of potentially important questions regarding parent involvement and children's educational use of television. The general model of FAMILY AS EDUCATOR; Utilizing Television as an Educational Resource, presented in Figure 1, is proposed as an organizational approach of structuring the many possible elements and their inter-relationships. It is hoped that the current study will provide descriptive information about families with children and how they educationally use and benefit from television programming.

FIGURE 1

FAMILY AS EDUCATOR:

Utilizing TV as an Educational Resource



mily as ucator. → Television as an Educational Resource → Educational Methods → Learner → Educational Objective

nily Structure:
- . nuclear
- b. single parent
- . extended

ents' Age

ents' Education

mily Values

ild Rearing

Viewing Habits

mily Interaction atterns

Programming:
- a. news
- b. drama
- c. cartoons
- d. commercials
- e. comedy
- f. documentaries
- g. game shows
- h. sports
- i. educational
- j. adventures

Content:
- a. knowledge
- b. language
- c. cultural
- d. values

Form:
- a. words
- b. color
- c. shape

Rules

Modeling

Content Selection

Behavior Shaping

Direct Mediation

Indirect Mediation

Springboard Techniques

Life Choices

Cognitive Development

Sex Roles

Cultural Roles

Age Roles

Cognitive:
- a. information.
- b. language development
- c. literacy
- d. critical of information
- e. cause of/effect of human interaction

Affective:
- a. social norms and values
- b. social development
- c. personal development
- d. life choices

Performance:
- a. academic
- b. social interaction
- c. reflective conduct
- d. behavioral options

The model suggests five major kinds of variables: Family as Educator, Television as an Educational Resource, Educational Methods, Learner, and Educational Objectives. While many hypothesized elements will need to be explored in experimental settings (e.g., the relative effectiveness of direct mediation and indirect mediation, or the interactive effects of mediation method and age of child), a descriptive data base is first needed for most of the variables. Thus the current study collected descriptive data on what different kinds of families (e.g., Anglo, Black, Mexican American, urban, suburban, rural, single-parent, two-parent) and different ages of children did while watching television. In particular, it was hypothesized that family conversations about television program content, the family members co-viewing, and the regularity and/or planfulness of viewing would be important family behaviors to monitor. Finally, information on whether the family was viewing a program for educational purposes and what parents thought their children were learning from a program was also collected. The data collected from families regarding these variables provide the needed description information of what families do when they view television, and provide the needed foundation from which to develop and explore experimental hypotheses about causal relationships among the many elements of family television viewing at home.

SCOPE OF REPORT

This report attempts to clarify the issues of families' use of television and the potential educational benefits. The relevant scientific literature is reviewed and potentially important parameters are isolated and discussed. A model of family use of television is developed. The design of a study to collect the needed descriptive information of families' activities while viewing television, especially activities that could be related to television viewing as an educational experience is completed. Finally, the data are presented and the implications are reviewed.

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

The field of television research lacks an accurate description of how different kinds of families use television. A major problem in researching family use of TV is the reliance upon self-report (Dorr, 1978). Even on the issue of how much TV children watch, reports vary so widely that one must question the validity of reported correlations between viewing and other variables. Lo Sciuto (1971) found that people reported a range of 183 minutes per day for an "average" day to 105 minutes on an average diary day's viewing. Roper (1971) reported 170 minutes and Nielsen (1970) reported 190-220 minutes average viewing per day. In comparing taped in-home observations with diary-reported viewing, Bechtel, Achelpohl, and Akera (1972) found a strong tendency to over-report viewing time. Lyle (1972) suggested that the question of amount of TV viewing time is perhaps not very important, but it is merely an example of a very simple question that is not answered because of the myriad difficulties arising from self-report or parental report of child TV viewing behavior.

Children Learning from Television

Children watch a lot of television and learn many things from television. While the available evidence is contradictory regarding the impact of television upon children's academic development, nonetheless, there are overwhelming data which indicate that children not only learn from television programming, but also learn a diverse array of things. Postman (1979) argues forceably that TV is a curriculum, is children's first curriculum, and in many ways may be children's most effective curriculum.

Many studies have found that television programming is very effective in a number of specific areas. Regarding children's knowledge of the working world and occupations and children's occupational aspirations, television has proven to be a very effective teacher. DeFleur and DeFleur (1967) reported that "a considerable amount of information about occupational roles is gained from the medium" (p. 785) and that "the influence of television as a learning source was substantial concerning the social rankings of occupations" (p. 787). DeFleur and DeFleur concluded that "television is a more potent source of occupational status knowledge than either personal contact or the general community culture" (1967, p. 787). These findings have been replicated and expanded. Jeffries-Fox and Signorielli (1978) found children's conceptions of occupations to be consistent with televised portrayals. In experimental studies of traditional and non-traditional televised portrayals of occupations, television was found to be an effective teacher (Miller and Reeves, 1975; O'Bryant and Corder-Bolz, 1978a, 1978b). In a large, quasi-experimental study involving two cities in which currently syndicated daily TV series had not been available in the other city during the last five years, Abel, Fontes, Greenberg and Atkin (1980) found that "being exposed to the programs substantially alters selected perceptions of occupational roles and...exposure definitely affects the child's aspirations for the occupations and their evaluation of the role" (Greenberg, 1980, p. 20). Similarly, Nunnellee and Corder-Bolz (1980) reported that the portrayal of occupations in commercials could directly affect children's knowledge of occupations and their aspirations for the occupations.

In the area of children's attitudes toward the elderly, Gerbner and Signorielli (1979) found that younger viewers and people who watch television more frequently are more likely to believe the common television portrayal of older people as being not alert and not capable. Korzenny and Nevendorf (1979) found analogous results with adults, including the elderly.

Similar results have been found in the area of children's attitudes regarding sex roles. Beuf (1974), McGhee (1974) and Corder-Bolz (1980a) have found that television's modeling of sex-related roles can be a very effective curriculum with children. Similarly again, the developing evidence suggests that television programming effectively teaches children beliefs and values regarding family structure and family roles. Hines, Greenberg, and Buerkel (1977) found that television portrayal of families may teach viewing children how family members should communicate with each other. Walters (1978) suggests that television portrayals may be altering children's beliefs about how parents and children should behave. Preliminary findings from a project by Buerkel-Rothfuss, Greenberg, and Nevendorf (reported in Greenberg, 1980) provide further evidence that television portrayals of families have a direct impact on children's perceived realities of family behaviors and family roles.

While the above appears to be a lengthy list of areas in which television provides an effective curriculum, in actuality the list is much longer. There is at least limited evidence that children learn about social issues, political issues, about other cultures and other historic and future times, and about geography and animals from television. Indeed, as Corder-Bolz (1980a) asserts, "it is important to realize that there are many issues presented on television...(in many) cases television may be the sole source of information." (p. 116).

Children Mis-learning from Television

A disturbing aspect of children's learning via television is that often children do not understand nor realistically interpret what they see and hear on television. In a study using an episode from ALL IN THE FAMILY, Meyer (1976) found that children as old as 12 years failed to understand the major points of the plot. When asked what they saw in a television program, children will report the visually portrayed acts and events rather than the plot or story. While large portions of the story line in television programs are presented by the verbal interactions among characters and events and consequences are implied as the program goes from one scene to the next, children appear to be unaware of the developing story and instead perceive most television programming as a series of discrete, independent "picture" actions.

Further, young children do not understand the motives and consequences of acts portrayed in television programs (Collins, 1973). Additionally, Collins found that young children will often evaluate television characters in terms of the consequences of their acts, e.g., aggressors were bad because they were sent to jail. Collins and Westby (1975) found that young children would come to "different interpretations of inter-scene relationships than adults would have made themselves or would expect of children" (p. 6). For example, in a study using an episode from ADAM-12 in which grade school students playing hookey from school were taken to the police station to wait for their parents, four- and five-year-old children viewing the episode learned about playing hookey from school but failed to learn that it is wrong. Similarly, young children fail to understand television commercials (e.g., Wartella and Ettera, 1977; Ward, 1972; Wartella, 1980). Even adolescents fail to maturely interpret television portrayals. In a study of 13- to 18-year-old girls, Corder-Bolz and Cox (1980) found that 33% of the girls thought of adult heterosexual relationships portrayed in television programs as being similar to real life relationships. Even more disturbing, in a comparable sample of pregnant adolescent (unmarried) girls, 70% regarded the television portrayals as being realistic. Although there are little available data, many parents and educators believe that adolescents may similarly misinterpret television portrayals of drug use, the use of physical force to resolve conflict, and other social behaviors.

Children and youth learn many things from television. As Corder-Bolz (1980b) suggests, for a large proportion of American children, television has become the number one teacher and the number one parent. Television has become our most influential educator. It presents a very wide range of information. Because of its visual format, its use is less restricted by a child's ability to read or to understand a particular language. Children clearly find television more accessible than books, newspapers or magazines. However, an important problem with television as teacher is that many of the students fail to understand or maturely interpret the curriculum content. Thus two basic questions need to be answered:

1. how can home television be used as an educational resource, and
2. how can families be encouraged to use television for educational objectives?

Educational Use of Television

There is little literature on current or potential educational uses of television. The few articles and books written in the area contain even less scientific data. In the absence of previous work to build upon, it may be reasonable to propose four categories of educational uses of television.

Viewing education programs. The PBS stations as well as many commercial stations broadcast educational programs as regular series and as special programs. SESAME STREET, ELECTRIC COMPANY, THE BODY HUMAN, the CBS Reading Program, and the NBC Special Treats are well known examples. Some families purposefully watch such programs because of the educational value for their children.

Viewing informative programs. Many commercial television programs such as documentaries, news programs and docu-dramas are perceived by parents as being educational. ROOTS and ELEANOR are the probably best known examples. These programs often present carefully researched information.

Evaluating all TV programming. All television viewers, especially young viewers, can learn more from a television program by evaluating the program content. Television: A Family Focus, published by SEDL under a contract with USOE, is an example of encouraging children and their parents to learn more from television by asking questions about the programs during and after viewing. Children can learn about life situations by asking questions such as, "Are the characters realistic?", "Is the situation realistic?", "What would I do?" Children can learn about different people and historic time periods by analyzing programs such as LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE. Children can learn about emotions, motives, and values by thinking and talking about almost any dramatic television program.

Special educational uses of TV. As Potter (1976), DeFranco (1980), and others have suggested, there are a multitude of ways in which television can be used to teach specific skills. The various patterns and visuals can be used to teach shapes and colors. The number of commercials, the number of characters, the number of objects, etc., can be used to teach counting skills. Creative and critical thinking can be taught by turning off the sound and asking the students what is being said. Similarly, the video can be turned off and children can be asked to imagine what is happening.

Students can practice their grammar lessons by looking for grammatical mistakes in television commercials. As Rosemary Potter says, the potential is limitless.

Families' Educational Use of Television

There is little literature on the issue of families' educational use of television, and even less data. The limited data, however, do permit some insight. For example, apparently families make little use of educational television programs. The 1977 Nielson data indicate that approximately 11 million 2- to 11-year-old children watched prime time television. The average 2- to 5-year-old watched 29 hours per week of television programming, with 24% of the viewing occurring during prime time, 28% during the afternoon and early evening, and 29% during the day. The average 6- to 11-year-old watched almost 27 hours of television programming, with 35% occurring during the afternoon and early evening, and 29% during prime time. The MUPPETS was the highest ranked program among 2- to 11-year-old children with a 19.8% share of that audience. THE BRADY BUNCH followed with a 18.6% share, WONDERAMA with a 15.5% share, DAKTARI with a 14.5% share, GILLIGAN'S ISLAND with a 13.1% share, MY THREE SONS with a 12.5% share, and BEWITCHED and MIGHTY MOUSE with a 12.0% share.

In a study by LeRoy (1978) in six cities, it was found that of the day-time viewing households with children, approximately 23% viewed only children's programs, approximately 21% viewed only non-children's programs and 16% viewed both kinds of programs. Approximately 41% of the 2- to 6-year-old children and approximately 11% of the 7- to 12-year-old children viewed SESAME STREET at least once during the week of the study. Approximately 22% of the 2- to 6-year-old children and 7% of the 7- to 12-year-olds viewed ELECTRIC COMPANY at least once. For MR. ROGERS, 21% of the 2- to 6-year-old children and 6% of the 7- to 12-year-old children viewed at least once. For ZOOM, approximately 12% of the 2- to 6-year-old children and 7% of the 7- to 12-year-old children viewed at least once during the week.

Even more discouraging, in a study of viewership of ESAA television series by Applied Management Sciences (1978), it was found that 3% of 1st graders, 2% of 2nd graders, and 0% of 7th and 10th graders watched CARRASCOLENDAS at least once during the week prior to the study. Similarly, 1% of the 1st graders and 10th graders, and 3% of the 4th and 7th graders watched INFINITY FACTORY at least once. Five percent of the 1st graders, 3% of the 4th and 7th graders, and 1% of the 10th graders watched REBOP at least once. Three percent of the 1st graders and 2% of the 4th graders watched VEGETABLE SOUP at least once. In terms of students who "ever" watched any particular series, the viewership percentages generally increased to 15% to 20% points.

Parental Involvement

The limited available data also suggest that parental involvement in children's television viewing is very limited. Greenberg, Ericson and Vlahos (1972) stated that television is generally not accompanied by any significant family interaction toward the television or program content. Bower (1973) found that from 25% to 46% of parents attempted to "control" their children's television viewing, depending upon the education level of the parents. Bower's data further suggests that parental control is not related to the age of the child or children but likely a function of the family's culture as represented by parents' education level. Ward, Wackman and Wartella (1977) found a very low incidence of parent-child discussions about television commercials. Robertson, Rossiter and Gleason (1980) found "moderate" parent-child interactions regarding certain categories of commercials. Mohr (1976) in a large survey study reported, "The vast majority of the students reported no parental guidance on the viewing of each evening television program listed in the questionnaire." (p. 124). Eighty-eight percent of the students reported receiving no parental guidance on 75 of the 86 programs included in the study. The interesting question raised by the Mohr study is that having observed the relatively low incidence of parental guidance, what kinds of programs are the object of parental guidance? Students reported receiving positive parental guidance for programs such as local news, 60 MINUTES, WILD KINGDOM, CAPTAIN & TENNILLE, HAPPY DAYS, LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE, MONDAY NITE FOOTBALL and STARSKY AND HUTCH. Students also reported receiving negative parental guidance for such programs as SYBIL, RICH MAN, POOR MAN II, EXECUTIVE SUITE, FAMILY, MAUDE and SONNY AND CHER. However, there was a positive correspondence between the nature of the parental guidance reported by the students and their preference for programs.

In a study by Corder-Bolz and Marshall (1980) involving 3,321 families, 52% of the parents reported that they "always" or "often" try to limit the amount of their children's viewing. Seventy-nine percent reported that they were able to control television's influence on their children. However, only 54% of the parents reported talking to their children about specific programs. Even these data can be expected to be inflated by the social desirability of the responses being solicited. Interestingly, more Anglos (37%) felt that television influenced their children's values than did Blacks (21%) or Mexican Americans (28%). An unexpected finding is that apparently the parents were much more likely to talk about programs which reflected their own views, rather than to discuss a TV program to overcome negative portrayals.

In a large interview study, Martin and Benson (1970) found "the working class child watches TV more but is less likely to discuss the educational implications of what he sees with his father" (p. 413). Similarly, working class fathers reported the greatest use of parental rules for TV viewing (with upper, middle, and lower class fathers reporting less use of TV rules), but there apparently was a positive linear relationship between the father's education and use of TV rules. The data also indicated a strong positive relationship for social class and parents' education with "parental use of TV as an educational aid." Seventy-three percent of the upper class fathers and 75% of the upper class mothers reported using television as an educational aid, in contrast to 57% of the fathers and 63% of the mothers in the working class sample reporting such use. Similarly, 81% of the professional fathers in comparison to 50% of the less-than-high-school-educated-fathers reported using TV as an educational aid. While these data suggest that parents who already have a demonstrated concern for educational achievement report using television for educational purposes, an alternative interpretation is that the higher educated interviewees were more sensitive or alert to the social desirability of their responses. However, Dervin (1970) also reported that youth from lower income and from Black families experienced less parental control of viewing. Further, Bower (1973) reported that college educated parents were more likely to control their children's television viewing than parents with a grade school education.

Parental Mediation

An important issue in families' educational use of television is that several studies have found parents as well as parent surrogates can be very effective in enabling children and youth to better understand and more realistically interpret television content. Perhaps the earliest study to suggest that adult co-viewing with a child can change the impact of television content is one by Hicks (1965) in which an adult's comments (either positive or negative) about a program portraying the use of violence affected the degree of aggression exhibited by children in a post-test situation. Children who viewed the program with an adult who made positive comments about the televised violence showed more aggression than children who heard the adult make a negative evaluation of the televised violence.

Other evidence of the significance of positive impact of family verbal interaction during viewing is found in Bogatz and Ball's (1971) first-year evaluation of SESAME STREET: children who watched and learned more came from homes where the mother watched the program with the child and where the mother talked with the child about the show. Later, Salomon (1974) found that, when mothers were encouraged to watch SESAME STREET with their children for two hours a week, the children (particularly the lower-SES group) developed more of the specific cognitive skills the programs were designed to teach.

The literature further supports the notion that other adults can affect what a child learns and retains from television content. Singer and Singer (1974) included in one of their treatment groups an adult who involved herself with the on-going program and who called the children's attention to specific points. The 3- and 4-year-olds in that group gained significantly more knowledge from the episodes of MISTER ROGERS than did other groups.

In 1976 James Walling reported results of a study in which effects upon first-grade children whose mothers interacted with their child during routine television viewing were contrasted with effects upon children in a "non-interaction" group whose mothers were present but who did not interact during viewing, and in contrast with effects upon children in a "control" group who did not view television during the experimental period. After the one-week experimental period, children in the interaction and the non-interaction groups had acquired a greater ability to complete social problem-solving tasks. This was interpreted by Walling to indicate an important positive, social learning aspect of television programming. In addition, the gain for the interaction group was substantially greater, which indicates that mothers can successfully mediate television content. Although the Walling study is important, it suffers from some methodological weaknesses and from a very small sample size, i.e., from seven to nine children in each group.

A study to explore further adult mediation of TV was conducted by Corder-Bolz & O'Bryant (1978). Sixteen boys and sixteen girls who were 4 to 5 years old were randomly assigned in same-sex pairs to one of the two experimental groups. The children watched an episode from the ADAM-12 series and commercials used at the time the show was aired in the early spring of 1976. The ADAM-12 series is considered to be a family-hour program and is notable for its lack of violence and its orientation towards children. The particular show used dealt with children being truant from school and subsequently getting into trouble.

In the first group, pairs of children watched the 30-minute episode with a well-liked preschool teacher who made neutral comments about the program (e.g., "Let's sit here and watch a TV show."). In the second group, pairs of children watched the same ADAM-12 episode with the same preschool teacher who made general explanatory comments (e.g., "Oh, no, that boy is in trouble." "He did not go to school when he was supposed to." "He was playing hookey and that is bad."). The children who watched the program with the preschool teacher who talked about the program content showed a highly significant increase in their knowledge of specific details of the program, an increase in their general knowledge of truancy, a decrease in erroneous knowledge of truancy, and an increase in positive attitudes. These respective increases and decreases were still very much evident on a one-week post-test.

One of the least empirical, but most provocative, studies is by Safran (1976); this is the only study in the literature in which parents made a joint effort to control the number of hours each day that their children viewed TV. For a four-week period, the parents of a group of 15 preschool-age children limited their child's viewing to just one hour a day. The parents kept diaries on what happened as they curtailed their child's viewing. Positive effects were reported by almost all the families in the study: a once passive small girl became less shy and more outgoing, an over-active and aggressive boy became calmer and less hurtful to his pets, and, for one school-age child in the study, grades improved appreciably once homework was no longer done in front of the TV set. Most importantly, the families experienced an increase in intra-family activities, and found that communication between all members of the family increased and improved.

Chaffee and Tims (1976) reported that higher parental control over their children's televiewing and higher parent emphasis on non-aggressive behavior resulted in lower correlations between viewing televised violence and self-reported aggressiveness. However, parental interpretation of televised violence in one sample (N = 147) raised the correlation, but in a second sample (N = 423) slightly lowered the correlation.

In an early study by Chaffee, McLeod, and Atkin (1971) in which survey and interview data were collected from junior and senior high school students and their parents in 1968, the viewing habits and preferences "of the parent and child (were found to be) related to the values emphasized within families."

Atkin and Greenberg (1977) surveyed 721 children in the 4th, 6th and 8th grades, and additionally conducted interviews of a random subsample of 293 mothers of the children. It is interesting that 49% of the mothers of the 4th graders reported providing interpretation of televised physical aggression. For the mothers of 6th graders, parental interpretation dropped to 45% and for the 8th graders, parental interpretation declined to 36%. With regard to televised verbal aggression, parental interpretation was reported for 49% of the 4th graders, 40% of the 6th graders, and 26% of the 8th graders. Interestingly, with high parental mediation, the correlation between children's exposure to verbal aggression and the children's self-report of verbal aggression decreased. However, with high parental mediation, the correlation between televised physical aggression and children's self-report aggression increased. For televised pro-social behavior, parental mediation increased the correlation between exposure and behavior. Perhaps most important, higher parent-child co-viewing appeared to significantly lower the correlations of exposure to televised physical aggression and televised verbal aggression with children's aggressive behavior.

Television and Parenting

Finally, there is a limited literature on possible parenting approaches regarding television. Barcus (1969) reported that parents controlled their child's television viewing for the following reasons: (a) that the child may otherwise be prematurely exposed to the adult world; (b) that television is less important than other activities (such as schoolwork and outdoor play); and (c) that they were fearful that their children might imitate behavior in programs with themes of violence.

Rossiter and Robertson (1975) posit four possible areas in which a parent can intervene and control the child's TV viewing:

- amount or number of television exposure;
- amount of viewing supervision (i.e., parental control of content);
- parental co-viewing of the child's television viewing; and
- parent-child interaction, i.e., frequency of intrafamily activities other than TV watching.

Leichter (1980), in a large interview study of families, found television to be a significant component of many families' lives. She further found four different parental approaches to "mediating" the use of the family television: directive, censoring, limiting and scheduling.

Lemon (1976) presented several parenting approaches to teaching critical viewing skills. One major approach is discussion of the many issues related to television content and television viewing. The complex concept of reality as it applies to television content can be discussed with students. The different patterns of stereotyping can be discussed with students. Lemon indicates that "Parent/child co-viewing and mutual discussion is important ... because parents are themselves a primary outside source of information" (p. 3). Exposure to magazines and newspapers, and practice in discussing information from them can further help a student determine the extent of the realism of television programs. Lemon also suggests that parents and children need to learn "more about how and why television programs are produced and broadcast and then discuss what this suggests about the reality of program content" (p. 3).

O'Bryant and Corder-Bolz (1978) outlined six methods parents could use to help their children acquire and use critical TV viewing skills:

Limited Viewing. Parents can help their children become aware of the role and place of television in their lives by limiting the amount of time they view TV. While television viewing is a legitimate activity, there is also a variety of other activities for all members of the family.

Content Control. Many parental values can be communicated by limiting the kinds of programs children are permitted to view. In some cases, parents may wish to encourage their children to watch a program; in other cases, parents may wish to discourage or not allow the viewing of a program.

Purposeful Viewing. Probably the most difficult viewing skill to learn is purposeful viewing. Because of easy access to TV programming and, in many cases, its constant presence in the home, many children find it "easier" to simply watch television, regardless of what is on, rather than engage in another activity. Since this viewing skill involves the re-formulation of personal habits, it is often the slowest to be acquired.

Direct Mediation. Parents can directly help children in the use of specific viewing skills. By providing explanatory or editorial comments, a parent causes a child to naturally perceive the programming in a larger context.

Indirect Mediation. Parents can model critical viewing skills by discussing and evaluating the program with a spouse or older child in the presence of their children. This unintrusively teaches children not only how to critically view television but, more important, that television should be viewed critically.

Springboard Technique. There are many applications and implications of television relevant to contemporary and personal situations. Television programming presents a wide range of human situations such as cheating, stealing, drug abuse, and pre-marital sex. A TV program can be used as a neutral setting for a parent to discuss a sensitive issue. As a consequence, the child or adolescent not only sees television as a source of information and cultural value, but also sees those ideas and values in a larger and more mature context.

Models of Family Use of Television

Based upon the available data, it appears that there are at least ten different models of family use of television. All of these approaches to use of home television are probably further modified by a number of family characteristics. In addition, the ten models are not necessarily mutually exlcusive, in that a family may incorporate two or more into their family lifestyle.

Laissez-faire: Parents don't regulate or control children's television viewing. Within the limits of school and bedtime schedules, the children mostly watch what they want to, when they want to. There of course is usually a "negotiation" process to decide which program to watch, though some children do have their own TV.

Strict TV rules: Parents establish and enforce TV viewing time limits and content censorship.

Babysitter: Many parents appear to use television as a convenient babysitter while they conduct other family activities such as cooking or cleaning.

Tension avoidance: In at least some families, television viewing has been found to be a family method of preventing or avoiding family tensions and hostilities (Rosenblatt and Cunningham, 1976). This may be supported by the conclusion of Chaffee and Tims (1976) that adolescents watched more television if they had troubled interpersonal relationships. Murray (1972) and Bailyn (1959) reported data to support such an interpretation. But other studies have provided contradicting data (e.g., Lyle and Hoffman, 1972; Chaffee and McLeod, 1972).

Background noise: Medrich (1979) reported data which supports the long suspected notion that in many families, television, most of the time, is not watched but merely provides background noise.

Television addiction: With many individuals watching more than 40 hours of television programming per week, it appears that the term "addiction" may be appropriate. Some appear to experience withdrawal symptoms when denied TV (Winn, 1978). It has been reported that on the average, when the home TV is broken, it is fixed or replaced within three days.

Family entertainment: For many families, television provides convenient, inexpensive, and sometimes high quality entertainment.

At home education: From several studies, it is clear that some families use television as a means to supplement a child's formal education.

Family co-viewing: For many families, evening television is one of the few opportunities for a family to be together and to do something together. Along with bowling, camping, and a few other activities, television is seen as something the whole family can enjoy.

No TV or limited TV: A very small percentage of American families has no television. In interviews with parents of families with no television, it is often reported that having no TV in the home was an overt, hostile and desperate decision to live life without television. However, there are also many families who are so busy with community, school, social, and job-related activities that they have little time or interest in television fare.

There is little data on what kinds of family processes are involved in determining family use of television. Chaffee, McLeod and Atkins (1971) reported that perceived family communication emphasizing social conformity and self-expression was related to higher viewing of news programs and lower viewing of entertainment programs. Lyle and Hoffman (1972) found 6th graders' high viewing to be related with reported low frequency of parent-child discussions of current issues. In a large questionnaire study by Corder-Bolz and O'Bryant (1974), three basic family processes were found to determine family usage of television.

> Authority pattern: It was generally found that patriarchal families were more likely to control children's viewing time and content but less likely to promote co-viewing or educational use of TV. Matriarchal families were found to promote at least sibling co-viewing. Egalitarian families were generally found to watch the least television but to watch the most educational programming.
>
> Family organizer: It was found that the family authority figure was not necessarily the family "organizer". In some families, the father had the most authority, and established the family rules, organized family activities and planned family activities. However, in many families, the father may have been the authority but it was the mother who organized the family. Usually it was the family organizer who determined the educational uses, if any, of the family television.
>
> Child rearing: Several child rearing practices were also found to be related to families' use of television. Strict vs. loose discipline practices and encouraging individuality vs. authoritarian child rearing practices were highly related to parental control of the amount and content of children's television viewing.

In addition, there appear several other salient family variables. Family structure probably has a strong influence on home use of television. For example, single-parent families would be likely to use television as a baby-sitter; in contract, extended families would likely have more co-viewing. In addition, the number of children in a family also would influence the amount of co-viewing and the total time the set is on. There are also some limited data which suggest that family television usage patterns vary as a function of the families' ethnicity, and income, parental education, and type of habitat (i.e., urban, suburban, rural).

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The literature suggests there may be three general categories of family-related variables which affect the educational outcomes of children's television viewing experiences.

1. Family parameters. It is hypothesized that the demographic variables of ethnicity, housing environment and family structure directly influence (e.g., family structure) or reflect other influential variables (e.g., ethnicity and housing environment) that affect families' home television viewing environment and families' home television viewing behaviors.

There is at least limited evidence, for example, that children in Mexican American families are more likely than children in Anglo and Black families to view television with their parents. Families in urban environments appear to view television more than families in suburban and rural environments. Children in families with a single parent appear to watch television alone more than children in families with two parents. Additionally, the number of children in a family, the age of the oldest child, the family's income, and the education of the parents appear to affect a family's television viewing habits and behaviors, and appear to affect the extent and nature of the parents' involvement in the children's television viewing.

2. Child parameters. It is hypothesized that a child's age will directly influence the kind and number of television programs which are viewed and the nature of the educational benefits derived from viewing television programs.

There is direct evidence that a child's television viewing preferences and habits are to a large extent a product of the child's age. Further, there is limited evidence that a child's sex influences his or her television viewing preferences and habits.

3. Parental involvement. It is hypothesized that the nature and extent of parents' involvement in their children's television viewing directly influences the educational quality of the children's television viewing experiences.

There is substantial evidence that parent-child co-viewing, parent-parent and parent-child conversations about television content, families' planfulness in television viewing, and families' reasons for television viewing are important determinants of the content and complexity of a child's learning from television programs. The major unanswered question is that of how many parents are involved in what ways with their children's television viewing.

METHODOLOGY

The scientific methodology to be used in a study of families' use of television is a serious and controversial issue.

There is little question that self-report is a good measure of some things (e.g., attitudes and opinions). However, there is growing concern that the kinds of data needed to understand television viewing in the home can not be obtained through self-report methodologies. Much of television viewing behavior is out of awareness and not available for accurate recall, and thus can not be validly measured by self-report instruments.

The occurrence of differences between parental perception and child perception of the most basic issues (i.e., what is watched and when) as well as more complex issues such as the nature and frequency of interaction while watching TV is an important example of the questionable validity of self-report data. Greenberg, Ericson, and Vlahose (1971), for instance, reported that mothers claim more family interaction occurs while watching. Martin and Benson (1970) found mothers claimed less viewing by their children, stricter rules, and more co-viewing than their children reported. There apparently is even little agreement in individual families as to what television behavior is or means. Self-report, then, of television behavior is of limited use in reporting actual behavior as opposed to perceived behavior.

There is a clear need to conduct in-the-home observational studies of how families use television. However, only three studies (Bechtel, Achelpohl, & Akers, 1971; Frazer & Reid, 1978; Lull, 1980) have attempted to observe in situ family TV viewing patterns. Bechtal _et al_. videotaped and then classified family members' behaviors according to the degree of attention paid to the TV set. However, Bechtel defined "watching TV" as eye contact, which oversimplifies the complex act of watching TV. The important contribution of the Bechtel study is the observation that "... watching television is not a behavior in its own right but is a mixture with many threads of which the viewer seems only partially aware. ...Television viewing does not occur in a vacuum, it is always to some degree background to a complex behavior in the home."

Frazer and Reid (1978) suggested that television is a social object like any other which can be manipulated by the viewer for any number of social ends. In an in-home participant observation study of children's use of TV commercials, they found that children did not generally pay close attention to commercials because of the product or for consumer information-seeking, but used commercials as an opportunity to initiate a desired interaction within the family setting, and in general manipulated TV messages for their own ends, such as singing and playing games. These findings are notably different from laboratory experimental findings regarding the effects of television advertising (e.g., Ward, 1972; Atkins, 1975). While the focus and the sample of Frazer and Reid's study is small, the contextual setting and participant observation methodology suggests a useful approach to understanding total family use of TV.

The alternatives to self-report appear to be direct observation and indirect observation (e.g., videotaping). An inescapable problem of observation methodology is the impact of the observer. In an open social environment such as a street corner and even a semi-closed social environment, the impact of an observer can be minimized. However, in a home setting, the social environment is a closed setting. When another person is added, the participants respond to and accommodate the addition. By the very presence of another person, the data collected by an observer is unavoidably distorted. Serious questions have to be raised as to the generalizability of the data. Another problem of participant observation retrieval has been that replication of findings is difficult, if not impossible, particularly since the data observed at a particular time by a particular observer may not be observed by another observer at another time in quite the same way.

A Study of Methodologies

A lack of methodological development has seriously flawed many studies and directly inhibits further growth in the field. Existing data suggest not only that social desirability distorts self-report data via questionnaire, interview, and diary methodologies, but also that people are largely unaware of how much TV they watch and of what they do while watching.

To prepare for an extensive study of how families use television conducted by SEDL in FY 1981, these methodological questions needed to be resolved. Specifically, an adequate methodological approach needed to be developed to permit the subsequent collection of valid and generalizable information. To determine the strengths and weaknesses of the several potential approaches, several different methodologies were comparatively evaluated.

During FY 1980, SEDL conducted a methodological study of families' use of television. Eight methodologies were developed and assessed: (1) questionnaire, (2) diary, (3) interview, (4) direct experimenter observation, (5) experimenter observation via telephone, (6) observation by family member, (7) audio recording, and (8) video recording. It was hoped that the data would provide the basis for a comparative evaluation of the nature of the limitations of each metholodogy, and a determination of which methodologies would be most appropriate to study particular kinds of variables.

The methodological study was conducted on family use of television utilizing the eight different approaches, some relatively novel, some well known. Four variables constituted the focus of the study: (1) which family members watch television, (2) what else family members do while watching, (3) who talks to whom while watching, and (4) what is the content of family verbal interactions while watching.

Four major conclusions were derived from the 1980 methodological study.

Conclusion 1. Much of a family's TV viewing is out of awareness. Furthermore, for many families, TV viewing is done in a much larger context of the family members' individually and collectively conducting family business. The television is often a part of the background given occasional attention by most family members. While television "viewing" is a part of many families' life styles, much of the viewing behavior is secondary to other ongoing activities and thus mostly out of awareness. Therefore, when people are asked about their TV viewing behavior through such methodologies as questionnaire, interview, and even diary, they are being asked about a part of the family interactions which is relatively minor and not given much forethought. These methodologies, in effect, ask the subjects to retrospectively create the events that were not eventful at the time. The data from these methodologies appear not to provide reasonably accurate information regarding what happened.

Conclusion 2. There are large differences across families as to how families use television. The research on family use of TV reflects a finding of the larger field of family research that there is no single concept of family. Along most major dimensions, virtually every family is different. The variance of family use of television appears to extend in many different directions, including family size, family structure, parent employment, parent education, ethnicity and housing patterns, as well as parental attitudes and child-rearing practices. Therefore, a description of how families use television must be based upon data gathered from many kinds of families. Insights and generalizations based upon a few families clearly will not accommodate the many ways families use TV.

Conclusion 3. The introduction of an observer appears to change the family interaction patterns. A fundamental assumption of observation methodologies is that the observer can, with practice and training, collect data without his or her presence biasing the phenomenon being observed. In open social systems such as street corners, as well as semi-closed social systems such as classrooms, the assumption appears to be correct. However, in closed social systems such as a family's home, the data suggest that the assumption is rarely, if ever, reasonable. In a closed social system, every person accommodates every other person present. The introduction of another person, even a non-interested observer, causes a change in the behavior of everyone.

Conclusion 4. Most families proved to be very resistant to the observational methodologies, such as staff observation and video observation. Less than 5% of the people contacted would even consider participating in the staff observation. Therefore, a serious question is raised regarding the generalizability of observational data collected from families who do volunteer for observational studies.

The best compromise methodology appeared to be the telephone observation. The data generated are very similar to that generated by the audio tape and video tape observation methodologies. Furthermore, the volunteer rate was very high, over 50%. Finally, the telephone observation methodology can economically meet the need for large, even national, samples of families. Therefore, it was concluded that the telephone observation combined with questionnaire is the best methodological approach to developing a descriptive data base regarding families' use of television.

PROCEDURES

Pilot Study

In Fall 1980, a preliminary observational study was conducted. A combination of the telephone observation and questionnaire methodologies was used. Questions were asked using the telephone about the immediate, ongoing or recently occurring family activities, especially regarding television viewing. A 25-item interview schedule was used which required approximately six minutes to complete over the phone. A follow-up questionnaire was mailed to obtain information on questions of a more general nature, such as "What programs do your children watch for educational purposes?"

The households were randomly selected from the Austin, Texas, telephone directory. Random digit dialing was explored; however, the use of the subject's name to initiate the phone conversation substantially increased the participation rate. Each household was called between 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. on a weekday evening (i.e., Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday). While there is considerable interest in family use of television on the weekends, and during the day and afternoon on the weekdays, it would have been impossible to study all the major viewing times. To make the study feasible, the prime time viewing was selected as being the most important. Further, family TV viewing patterns during the day of Saturday and Sunday, and on the evening of Friday, Saturday and Sunday appeared to be different from the weekday evening viewing pattern, and data from the different viewing periods should not be mixed. Thus, the study was restricted to 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday.

A total of 1,722 households was included in the study. Approximately 28% participated and 14% refused to participate. After three attempts, no answer was obtained from 31% of the households, and for another 27% the phone listing was no longer correct. Of the 484 participating households, 44% were households with two parents and at least one child, 3.5% were single-parent with at least one child, and 53% were households with no children. The observed proportion of single-parent families is substantially below the proportion in the community. It is possible that many of the 31% "no answer" households were single-parent families. Another possibility is that a very large proportion of the single-parent families does not have their telephone number listed.

Almost 80% of the two-parent families were watching television when called. Another 19% were not watching television and approximately 1.5% did not have a television. Interestingly, a relatively high percentage of the two-parent families, 13%, reported a conversation about the television program immediately prior to the phone call. Another 17% reported conversations unrelated to the program. It was found that virtually all of the conversations about the television program were not with regard to the content, e.g., wanted to change the channel, wanted to know the score, and "Anything else on?"

It is interesting that in almost 50% of the households with children, the children were not viewing television. Of those children who were viewing, 60% were involved in no other activity, while the other 40% were also involved primarily in homework, reading, eating and playing activities. It is also interesting that of the children watching television, almost 70% were watching with a parent. Thus the opportunity for parental commentary during television viewing is likely to be present in many families.

Study of Families' Educational Use of TV

Based upon the results of the Fall 1980 pilot study, several changes were made for the Spring 1981 study. The telephone observation questions were changed to attempt to retrieve more in-depth information about those relatively rare events of families using television in a manner that would educationally benefit their child or children. Because two educational-use activities were of particular interest, viewing educational program and parental commentary during viewing, several follow-up questions were added.

Variables. The primary variable was the educational uses of television in which families are involved. In the hope of developing a more complete understanding of how families educationally use television and the family processes that lead to family educational use of television, the telephone observation methodology was used to obtain data on the following questions:

What program is being viewed?

Who is viewing the program?

Who selected the program?

Did the family plan to watch the program?

Does the family usually watch the program?

What other activities are occurring?

Have there been any comments or discussion about the program?

If yes, who said what to whom?

Is there usually this kind of discussion when the family views this program?

The telephone interview was also used to gather basic demographic information. Although demographic information was additionally collected with the questionnaire, because the return rate of the questionnaires was expected to be about 60%, demographic questions were asked during the telephone interview to obtain at least basic demographic information on 100% of the participants.

Information was collected on the following demographic variables:

Relationship of household members to head of household.

Employment status of mother.

Education of parents.

Age of parents.

Age and sex of children.

Family ethnicity.

Type of neighborhood (urban, suburban, rural).

Finally, the questionnaire was used to collect information on general television viewing habits:

Average number of hours per day each child watches television.

The time limits on the children's TV viewing.

The content limits on children's TV viewing.

Educational programs usually viewed.

Informative programs usually viewed.

Co-viewing patterns.

How programs were selected.

When the television is usually turned on.

How decision is made to turn the television on.

What attempts do parents make to explain program content to their children?

The frequency of parental commentary and explanation.

The frequency of family discussion after viewing a program.

What programs have prompted a family member to pursue the subject of the program further?

Sample. The data from the pilot study suggested that there is great variance among families regarding family use of television. Furthermore, how any family uses television appeared to be dependent upon the family's structure, ethnicity, values, and housing environment. Therefore, a large sample with representation of Anglo, Black, and Mexican American families, and families living in urban, suburban, and rural locations was selected. Given the complexity of the phenomenon and the relative uniqueness of each family's use of television, the sample of 400 or more participating families was judged to be necessary to provide sufficient representation of each major television viewing constellation.

Instruments. The telephone interview schedule and the questionnaire (in Appendix A) were revised based upon the experience of the Fall 1980 pilot study. The telephone interview required about ten minutes to execute. The revised questionnaire was expected to require approximately the same amount of time.

Three hundred telephone numbers were randomly selected from the telephone directories of 14 areas in the Southwest including Austin, Abilene, Houston, Dallas, Corpus Christi, Waco, San Antonio, and Fort Worth, Texas; Baton Rouge and Rougon, Louisiana; and Los Alamos, White Rock, Albuquerque, and Santa Fe, New Mexico. Additionally, the Houston Independent School District provided a list of 20,000 student names with their parents' name and home telephone number from which families were randomly selected.

The calling procedures were outlined in the telephone interview schedule:

> Hello, my name is ________ and I'm calling from Southwest Educational Laboratory in Austin, Texas. We are conducting a national telephone survey on family TV viewing and would like to ask you a few questions. Would that be all right?
>
> Is your TV on?
>
> If TV is on, what program is on?
>
> Did anyone say something in the two minutes before the phone rang?
>
> How many children do you have living at home?

What are their ages?

If no children or TV not on, say "Thanks, goodbye."

Who is watching at least part of the program?

Are they doing anything else?

Who selected the program?

Did you plan to watch the program?

Does your family usually watch this program?

Have there been any comments or discussions about the TV program since the TV was turned on this evening?

If yes, what?

If yes, who was talking or listening in the discussion?

Is there usually (this kind of) or (no) discussion when your family views this program?

Why is your family watching this program?

Do you think your children are learning something from the program?

What are they learning?

We would also like to ask a few background questions. These are just voluntary.

How many TVs are in your home?

What is your household structure?

Does the wife work outside the home?

Do you live in an urban, suburban or rural neighborhood?

Would you describe yourself as white, black, Mexican American?

Thank you for helping us with our survey. We would also like to send you a more detailed questionnaire on your TV viewing habits, which would contain the same types of questions. In return for filling out the questionnaire, we will send you a free set of parenting materials which contain activities such as games and stories for you and your children. May we send you a questionnaire?

If yes, subject's correct address and zip code (explain subjects are obtained at random from the phone book).

Thank you.

The major change suggested by the pilot study was to determine early in the phone call whether the household had any children. If the household did not, the call was terminated and the household was dropped from the sample. If there was no answer on the first attempt to reach a household, two more attempts were made that evening.

Sampling Procedure. A total of 4,200 households were randomly selected from telephone books of cities and towns in the Southwest. Random digit dialing was explored; however, the use of the subject's name to initiate the phone conversation substantially increased the participation rate. Each household was called between 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. on a weekday evening (i.e., Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday). While there is considerable interest in family use of television on the weekends, and during the day and afternoon on the weekdays, it would have been impossible to study all the major viewing times. To make the study feasible, the prime time viewing was selected as being the most important. Further, the Nielson data strongly indicate that television viewing patterns during the day of Saturday and Sunday, and on the evening of Friday, Saturday and Sunday appeared to be different from the weekday evening viewing patterns, and data from the different viewing periods should not be mixed. Thus the study was restricted to 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

Three hundred telephone numbers were randomly selected from each of the telephone directories of 14 areas in the Southwest, including Austin, Abilene, Houston, Dallas, Corpus Christi, Waco, San Antonio, Fort Worth, Texas; Baton Rouge and Rougon, Louisiana; Los Alamos, Albuquerque, White Rock, and Santa Fe, New Mexico. Additionally, the Houston Independent School District provided a list of 20,000 student names with their parents' name and home telephone number from which 300 families were randomly selected. Austin, Houston, Dallas, Corpus Christi, San Antonio, Fort Worth, Baton Rouge, Albuquerque, and Santa Fe were selected to provide representation of families in large cities and suburbs. Houston, Dallas and Fort Worth were selected to provide representation of black families. Austin and San Antonio were selected to provide representation of Mexican American families. Abilene, Waco, Rougon, Los Alamos and White Rock were selected to provide representation of families in rural settings.

The telephone lists were randomly distributed to the interviewers who called the phone numbers as time permitted. If there was no answer, up to two additional calls to the number were conducted that same evening. Thus the total sample size reflects the number of families called rather than the number of calls made.

RESULTS

A total of 2,922 household phones were called. Participating households numbered 1,298; another 563 households refused to participate, with another 470 phones no longer operating and 591 households not at home. Almost 500 of the participating households had children living at home. A total of 443 households had children at home and were viewing television.

Approximately 65% of the 443 households with children and the television on were Anglo. Another 12.4% were black, and 14.0% were Mexican American. Approximately 29% of the sample lived in an urban setting, with 42.4% living in a suburban setting and 17.4% living in a rural setting. For 15.1% of the households, the oldest child was between 1 month and 5 years old, and 18.1% of the households had an oldest child between 6 years and 9 years old. For 30.0% of the households, the oldest child was between 10 years and 14 years old, and 31.4% of the households had an oldest child between 15 years and 17 years old.

Approximately 81% of the households were two-parent families. Another 11.5% of the households were single-parent families and another 3.8% of the households were classified as "other."

Of the 443 participating households with children and the television on, 11.1% reported a family conversation "in the two minutes before the phone rang" regarding the program or commercial. Another 20.1% reported a family conversation regarding a topic other than the programming being viewed. In approximately 69% of the households, there was no observed conversation. These data indicate that there are no family conversations during 69% of the families' viewing time. Further, conversations about the programming occur approximately 11% of the families' viewing time.

In a first special analysis based upon a sub-sample of families with at least one child 14 years old or younger watching television, it was found that in almost 52% of the households a child was reported to have selected the program. Approximately 60% of the households had planned or "sort of" planned to watch the program. Approximately 62% of the families reported that they usually or "sometimes" watch the program.

One of the most important aspects of the study is the observation of family discussions during family television viewing. In this first special analysis, it was found that 23.6% of the families had made comments about the television programming that evening. Regarding those families who did report conversations about the programming, 66.1% were reported as being parent-child conversations, 16.1% were reported as being child-child conversations, and 8.9% were reported as being parent-parent conversations.

In this first special analysis, it was found that 63.7% of the families reported they were viewing the program for "entertainment" reasons. Another 10.5% of the families reported they were viewing the program for "educational" reasons while 14.8% of the families reported viewing as "something to do" and another 9.3% of the families did not know why they were viewing. Almost 50% of the families reported that their children viewing the program were not learning from the program. Approximately 27% of the families reported that their child or children were learning from the program, and another 16% reported that their children were "maybe" learning from the program.

A second special analysis was conducted using a sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television (see Tables 1 through 38). This sub-sample was composed of 81 Anglo families, 19 black

TABLE 1

Second Special Analysis*

Families with Children and With Television On By Ethnicity

Ethnicity	No. of Responses	Percent of Sample
Anglo	81	66.4%
Black	19	15.6%
Mexican American	19	15.6%
Other	1	0.8%
No Response	2	1.6%
Total	122	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

families, and 19 Mexican American families. One family was categorized as "other" and two families did not give their ethnicity, bringing the sub-sample to a total of 122 families. Thirty percent of the families lived in urban settings; 44% of the families lived in suburban settings and 21% lived in rural settings (see Table 2). Eighty-one percent of the families were two-parent families and almost 14% were single-parent families. Another 4.9% of the families were categorized as "other" (e.g., child living with grandparents or child living with two adults of the same sex) (see Table 3).

Children's co-viewing television with a parent or sibling is an important dimension of children's television viewing behavior. If a child is viewing a television program alone, then there is no opportunity for direct verbal interaction regarding the program content. Thirty percent of the families reported that, at the time of the telephone call, a child was watching television alone. Another 21% reported that a child was watching television with a sibling or siblings, and 48% reported that a child was watching television with a parent or parents (see Table 4).

In the Anglo portion of the sub-sample, 51% of the families reported that a child was viewing television with a parent or parents, while 17% reported that child was viewing television with a sibling or siblings, and 31% reported that a child was viewing television alone (see Table 5). In contrast, almost 53% of the black families reported a child viewing television with a parent or parents, while 26% reported a child viewing with a sibling or siblings, and 21% reported a child viewing television alone. Thirty percent of the Mexican American families reported a child viewing television with a parent or parents, while 30% reported a child viewing television with a sibling or siblings, and 40% reported a child viewing television alone.

TABLE 2

Second Special Analysis*

Families With Children and With Television On by Housing

Housing Pattern	No. of Responses	Percent of Sample
Urban	37	30.3%
Suburban	54	44.3%
Rural	26	21.3%
Other	1	0.8%
No Response	4	3.3%
Total	122	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 3

Second Special Analysis*

Families With Children and With Television On by Family Structure

Family Structure	No. of Responses	Percent of Sample
Married Parent Families	99	81.2%
Single Parent Families	17	13.9%
Other	6	4.9%
Total	122	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 4

Second Special Analysis*

Family Co-Viewing

Families	No. of Responses	Percent of Sample
Child Alone	37	30.3%
Child with Sibling(s)	26	21.3%
Child with Parent(s)	59	48.4%
Total	122	100.0%

---

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 5

Second Special Analysis*

Family Co-viewing by Ethnicity

Families	Anglo	Percent of Sample	Black	Percent of Sample	Mexican American	Percent of Sample
Child Alone	25	31.3%	4	21.1%	8	40.0%
Child with Sibling(s)	14	17.5%	5	26.3%	6	30.0%
Child with Parent(s)	41	51.2%	10	52.6%	6	30.0%
Total	80	100.0%	19	100.0%	20	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

In the urban portion of the sub-sample, almost 46% of the families reported a child viewing with a parent or parents, while 27% reported a child viewing with a sibling or siblings and another 27% reported a child viewing alone (see Table 6). Fifty-five percent of the suburban families reported a child viewing television with a parent or parents, while only 7.4% reported a child viewing television with a sibling or siblings, and 37% reported a child viewing television alone. In the rural portion of the sub-sample, 42% of the families reported a child viewing television with a parent or parents, while almost 35% reported a child viewing with a sibling or siblings, and 23% of the families reported a child viewing television alone.

In the two-parent family portion of the sub-sample, 47% of the families reported a child viewing television with a parent or parents, while 20% of the families reported a child viewing television with sibling or siblings, and another 32% reported a child viewing alone (see Table 7). Forty-seven percent of the single-parent families reported a child viewing television with a parent, while 29% of the families reported a child viewing television with a sibling or siblings, and another 23% reported a child viewing television alone.

The next critical issue is the occurrence of conversations during television viewing, whether about the television content or about other topics. Almost 64% of the families reported that no conversations had occurred during the two minutes immediately prior to the telephone call (see Table 8). Another 25% reported conversations about topics not related to the television, and almost 12% of the families reported conversations about the television content being viewed.

TABLE 6

Second Special Analysis*

Family Co-viewing by Housing

Families	Urban	Percent of Sample	Suburban	Percent of Sample	Rural	Percent of Sample
Child Alone	10	27.0%	20	37.0%	6	23.1%
Child with Sibling(s)	10	27.0%	4	7.4%	9	34.6%
Child with Parent(s)	17	46.0%	30	55.6%	11	42.3%
Total	37	100.0%	54	100.0%	26	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 7

Second Special Analysis*

Family Co-viewing by Families Structure

Families	Two Parent	Percent of Sample	One Parent	Percent of Sample	Other	Percent of Sample
Child Alone	32	32.3%	4	23.5%	1	16.7%
Child with Sibling(s)	20	20.2%	5	29.4%	1	16.7%
Child with Parent(s)	47	47.5%	8	47.1%	4	66.6%
Total	99	100.0%	17	100.0%	6	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 8

Second Special Analysis*

Family Conversation

Families	No. of Responses	Percent of Sample
Conversation about Program	14	11.5%
Other Conversation	30	24.6%
No Conversation	78	63.9%
Total	122	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

In the Anglo portion of the sub-sample, almost 54% reported no conversation while viewing television, while almost 30% of the families reported conversations not related to the television, and almost 17% of the families reported conversations about the television content (see Table 9). In the black portion of the sub-sample, almost 79% of the families reported no conversations while viewing television; another 10% reported conversations about the television content. Eighty-five percent of the Mexican American families reported no conversations had occurred, while 10% reported conversations not related to the television and only 5% reported conversations about the television content.

In the urban portion of the sub-sample, 62% of the families reported no conversation had occurred, while 27% of the families reported conversations not related to the television, and almost 11% reported conversations about the television (see Table 10). Sixty-one percent of the suburban families reported that no conversations had occurred, while 24% of the families reported conversations not related to the television, and another 15% reported conversations about the television content. Almost 77% of the rural families reported that no conversations had occurred, while 19% of the families reported conversations not related to the television, and another 3.8% reported conversations about the television content.

In the two-parent family portion of the sub-sample, almost 64% reported that no conversation had occurred, while 23% reported conversations not related to the television, and another 13% of the families reported conversations about the television content (see Table 11). Almost 65% of the single-parent families reported that no conversations had occurred, while 29% of the families reported conversations not related to the television, and another 5.9% reported

TABLE 9

Second Special Analysis*

Family Conversation by Ethnicity

	Anglo	Percent of Sample	Black	Percent of Sample	Mexican American	Percent of Sample
Program	14	16.6%	2	10.5%	1	5.0%
Other	25	29.8%	2	10.5%	2	10.0%
None	45	53.6%	15	79.0%	17	85.0%
Total	84	100.0%	19	100.0%	20	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 10

Second Special Analysis*

Family Conversations by Housing

	Urban	Percent of Sample	Suburban	Percent of Sample	Rural	Percent of Sample
Program	4	10.8%	8	14.8%	1	3.8%
Other	10	27.0%	13	24.1%	5	19.2%
None	23	62.2%	33	61.1%	20	77.0%
Total	37	100.0%	54	100.0%	26	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 11

Second Special Analysis*

Family Conversation by Family Structure

	Two Parent	Percent of Sample	One Parent	Percent of Sample	Other	Percent of Sample
Program	13	13.1%	1	5.9%	0	0%
Other	23	23.2%	5	29.4%	2	33.3%
None	63	63.7%	11	64.7%	4	66.7%
Total	99	100.0%	17	100.0%	6	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

conversation about the television content.

Often, people view television while simultaneously engaged in other activities. However, almost 69% of the families reported that those who were viewing television were not engaged in any other activities (see Table 12). Another 11% of the families reported one or more people were eating while watching television, 8% reported viewers playing a game, 7% reported viewers also doing homework, while 4% reported other activities such as sleeping or grooming.

Data were collected regarding who selected the television program being viewed. More than 42% of families reported that the parent or parents had selected the program (see Table 13). Forty-three percent of the families reported that a child had selected the program, and almost 14% of the families reported that nobody selected the program being viewed.

In the Anglo portion of the sub-sample, 43% of the families reported that a parent had selected the program, while almost 40% reported that a child selected the program, and almost 18% reported that nobody selected the program being viewed (see Table 14). Forty-two percent of the black families reported a parent selected the program while 47% reported a child selected the program, and another 10% reported nobody selected the program being viewed. Almost 37% of the Mexican American families reported a parent selected the program, while 63% of the families reported a child selected the program, and none reported that "nobody" had selected the program.

In the urban portion of the sub-sample, 29% of the families reported that a parent had selected the program, while 54% reported that a child selected the program and 16% reported that nobody selected the program being viewed (see Table 15). Forty-eight percent of the suburban families reported a parent selected the program, while 35% reported a child selected the program, and

TABLE 12

Second Special Analysis*

Question 14: "Are They Doing Anything Else?"

Families	No. of Responses	Percent of Sample
Homework	9	7.4%
Chores	1	0.8%
Eating	13	10.7%
Playing Games	10	8.2%
Nothing	84	68.9%
Other	5	4.0%
Total	122	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 13

Second Special Analysis*

Question 15: "Who Selected the Program?"

Families	No. of Responses	Percent of Sample
Parents	52	42.6%
Child	53	43.4%
Nobody	17	14.0%
Total	122	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 14

Second Special Analysis*

Who Selected the Program by Ethnicity

Families	Anglo	Percent of Sample	Black	Percent of Sample	Mexican American	Percent of Sample
Parents	35	43.2%	8	42.1%	7	36.8%
Child	32	39.5%	9	47.4%	12	63.2%
Nobody	14	17.3%	2	10.5%	0	0%
Total	81	100.0%	19	100.0%	19	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 15

Second Special Analysis*

Who Selected the Program by Housing

Families	Urban	Percent of Sample	Suburban	Percent of Sample	Rural	Percent of Sample
Parents	11	29.7%	26	48.1%	12	46.2%
Child	20	54.1%	19	35.2%	12	46.2%
Nobody	6	16.2%	9	16.7%	2	7.6%
Total	37	100.0%	54	100.0%	26	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

almost 17% reported nobody selected the program being viewed. Forty-six percent of the rural families reported a parent had selected the program, while 46% reported a child selected the program, and almost 8% reported nobody selected the program.

In the two-parent portion of the sub-sample, 43% reported a parent had selected the program, while 42% reported that a child selected the program and 14% reported that nobody selected the program being viewed (see Table 16). Thirty-five percent of the single-parent families reported that a parent selected the program, while 47% reported that a child had selected the program, and almost 18% reported that nobody selected the program being viewed.

Purposeful or planned television viewing is an element thought to be missing in most people's habitual television viewing. However, in the sub-sample, almost 57% of the families reported that they had planned to watch the program (see Table 17). Another 11% of the families reported that they "sort of" planned to watch the program, while almost 30% reported that they had not planned to watch the program being viewed.

In the Anglo portion of the sub-sample, almost 58% of the families reported that they had planned to view the program, while 11% reported they had "sort of" planned to view, and almost 31% reported that they had not planned to view the program (see Table 18). Almost 74% of the black families reported that they had planned to view the program, while almost 16% reported they had "sort of" planned, and 10% reported they had not planned to view the program. Less than 37% of the Mexican American families reported they had planned to view the program, while another 10% reported they had "sort of" planned to view, and almost 53% reported they had not planned to watch the program.

In the urban portion of the sub-sample, almost 56% of the families

TABLE 16

Second Special Analysis*

Who Selected the Program by Family Structure

Families	Two Parent	Percent of Sample	One Parent	Percent of Sample	Other	Percent of Sample
Parents	43	43.4%	6	35.3%	3	50.0%
Child	42	42.4%	8	47.1%	3	50.0%
Nobody	14	14,2%	3	17.6%	0	0%
Total	99	100.0%	17	100.0%	6	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 17

Second Special Analysis*

Question 16: "Did You Plan to Watch This Program?"

Families	No. of Responses	Percent of Sample
Yes	69	56.6%
Sort of	14	11.5%
No	36	29.5%
No Response	3	2.4%
Total	122	100.0%

---

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 18

Second Special Analysis*

Planned to Watch Program by Ethnicity

Families	Anglo	Percent of Sample	Black	Percent of Sample	Mexican American	Percent of Sample
Yes	45	57.7%	14	73.7%	7	36,9%
Sort of	9	11.5%	3	15.8%	2	10.5%
No	24	30.8%	2	10.5%	10	52.6%
Total	78	100.0%	19	100.0%	19	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

reported that they had planned to view the program, while just under 6% reported that they had "sort of" planned to view, and 38% reported that they had not planned to view the program (see Table 19). Fifty-five percent of the suburban families reported that they had planned to view the program, and 9% of the families reported they had "sort of" planned, while 35% reported they had not planned to view the program. Sixty-nine percent of the rural families reported that they had planned to view the program, and 19% reported they had "sort of" planned to view, while 11% reported that they had not planned to view the program.

In the two-parent portion of the sub-sample, 53% reported that they had planned to view the program, and 13% reported they had "sort of" planned to view, while 33% of the families reported that they had not planned to view the program (see Table 20). More than 70% of the single-parent families reported that they had planned to view the program, and another 6% reported that they "sort of" planned to view the program, while 23% reported that they had not planned to view the program.

As a follow-up on the planned viewing question, families were asked if they usually watch the program. More than 62% of the families reported that they usually watch the program being viewed (see Table 21). Another 10% reported that they sometimes viewed the program, and 19% reported that they don't usually view the program.

In the Anglo portion of the sub-sample, 64% reported that they usually watch the program and another 10% reported that they sometimes view the program, while 26% reported that they don't usually watch the program (see Table 22). Almost 89% of black families reported that they usually watch the program and another 11% reported that they sometimes watch the program, while none of the

TABLE 19

Second Special Analysis*

Planned to Watch Program by Housing

	Urban	Percent of Sample	Suburban	Percent of Sample	Rural	Percent of Sample
Yes	19	55.9%	30	55.5%	18	69.3%
Sort of	2	5.9%	5	9.3%	5	19.2%
No	13	38.2%	19	35.2%	3	11.5%
Total	34	100.0%	54	100.0%	26	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 20

Second Special Analysis*

Planned to Watch Program by Family Structure

	Two Parent	Percent of Sample	One Parent	Percent of Sample	Other	Percent of Sample
Yes	51	53,2%	12	70.6%	6	100.0%
Sort of	13	13.5%	1	5.9%	0	0%
No	32	33.3%	4	23.5%	0	0%
Total	96	100.0%	17	100.0%	6	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 21

Second Special Analysis*

Question 17: "Does Your Family Usually Watch This Program?"

Families	No. of Responses	Percent of Sample
Yes	76	62.3%
Sometimes	12	9.8%
No	23	18.9%
Don't Know	2	1.6%
No Response	9	7.4%
Total	122	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 22

Second Special Analysis*

Family Usually Watches Program by Ethnicity

	Anglo	Percent of Sample	Black	Percent of Sample	Mexican American	Percent of Sample
Yes	46	63.9%	16	88.9%	13	65.0%
Sometimes	7	9.7%	2	11.1%	3	15.0%
No	19	26.4%	0	0%	4	20.0%
Total	72	100.0%	18	100.0%	20	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

black families reported that they don't usually watch the program. Sixty-five percent of the Mexican American families reported that they usually watch the program and another 15% reported that they sometimes watch the program, while 20% reported that they don't usually watch the program being viewed.

In the urban portion of the sub-sample, 79% of the families reported that they usually view the program and another 3% reported that they sometimes view the program while almost 18% reported that they don't usually watch the program being viewed (see Table 23). Sixty percent of the suburban families reported that they usually watch the program and another 17% reported that they sometimes watch the program, while almost 23% of the families reported they don't usually view the program. Almost 71% of the rural families reported that they usually view the program and another 8% reported that they sometimes view the program, while 21% reported that they don't usually watch the program.

In the two-parent portion of the sub-sample, 64% reported that they usually view the program and another 11% reported that they sometimes view the program, while almost 25% reported that they usually don't watch the program (see Table 24). Almost 89% of the one-parent families reported that they usually watch the program and another 5% reported that they sometimes watch the program, while 5% reported that they don't usually watch the program being viewed.

Additional data were collected regarding family discussion in terms of any that occurred since the television had been turned on that evening. Just over 20% of the families reported that there had been at least one comment or discussion about a television program since the television was turned on (see Table 25). Another 73% of the families reported that there had been no television related discussions and 5% of the families reported that they didn't know.

TABLE 23

Second Special Analysis*

Family Usually Watches Program by Housing

	Urban	Percent.of Sample	Suburban	Percent of Sample	Rural	Percent of Sample
Yes	27	79.4%	32	60.4%	17	70.8%
Sometimes	1	2.9%	9	17.0%	2	8.3%
No	6	17.7%	12	22.6%	5	20.9%
Total	34	100.0%	53	100.0%	24	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 24

Second Special Analysis*

Family Usually Watches Program by Family Structure

	Two Parent	Percent of Sample	One Parent	Percent of Sample	Other	Percent of Sample
Yes	57	64.0%	16	88.8%	3	75.0%
Sometimes	10	11.3%	1	5.6%	1	25.0%
No	22	24.7%	1	5.6%	0	0%
Total	89	100.0%	18	100.0%	4	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 25

Second Special Analysis*

Question 18: "Have There Been Any Comments or Discussion About the TV Programs Since the TV was turned on This Evening?"

Families	No. of Responses	Percent of Sample
Yes	25	20.5%
No	89	72.9%
Don't Know	6	5.0%
No Answer	2	1.6%
Total	122	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 26

Second Special Analysis*

Discussions of TV Programs by Ethnicity

	Anglo	Percent of Sample	Black	Percent of Sample	Mexican American	Percent of Sample
Yes	17	22.4%	3	17.6%	4	21.1%
No	59	77.6%	14	82.4%	15	78.9%
Total	76	100.0%	17	100.0%	19	100.0%

---

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 27

Second Special Analysis*

Discussions of TV Programs by Housing

	Urban	Percent of Sample	Suburban	Percent of Sample	Rural	Percent of Sample
Yes	9	29.0%	15	27.3%	0	0%
No	22	71.0%	40	72.7%	23	100.0%
Total	31	100.0%	55	100.0%	23	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 28

Second Special Analysis*

Discussions of TV Programs by Family Structure

	Two Parent	Percent of Sample	One Parent	Percent of Sample	Other	Percent of Sample
Yes	21	22.8%	4	23.5%	0	0%
No	71	77.2%	13	76.5%	5	100.0%
Total	92	100.0%	17	100.0%	5	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 29

Second Special Analysis*

Question 18-A: "If Yes, Who was Talking or Listening?"

Families	No. of Responses	Percent of Sample
Parent-Parent	3	12.0%
Parent-Child	17	68.0%
Child-Child	4	16.0%
Other	1	4.0%
Total	25	100.0%

---

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 30

Second Special Analysis*

Question 19: "Is There Usually This Kind of Discussion When Your Family Views This Program?"

Families	No. of Responses	Percent of Sample
Yes	29	23.8%
Sometimes	24	19.7%
No	28	22.9%
Don't Know	41	33.6%
Total	122	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 31

Second Special Analysis*

Question 20: "Why is Your Family Watching This Program?"

Families	No. of Responses	Percent of Sample
Educational	10	8.2%
Entertainment	83	68.0%
Something To Do	19	15.6%
Don't Know	10	8.2%
Total	122	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

In the Anglo portion of the sub-sample, 22% of the families reported at least one conversation about television content while 78% reported that no television related conversations had occurred since the television was turned on (see Table 26). Just over 17% of the black families reported television related conversations and 21% of the Mexican American families reported television related conversations.

In the urban portion of the sub-sample, 29% of the families reported television related conversations since the television was turned on, and 27% of the suburban and none of the rural families reported television related conversations (see Table 27).

In the two-parent portion of the sub-sample, almost 23% reported television related conversations, while 23% of the single-parent families reported television related conversations (see Table 28).

Of the families who reported television related conversations, 68% reported parent-child conversation about television content (see Table 29). Another 12% reported parent-parent conversations and 16% reported child-child conversations related to television programs being viewed.

The next question asked if the previously reported family conversations are typical of the family's television viewing behavior (see Table 30). Almost 24% of the families responded "yes" and another 20% responded "sometimes." Twenty-three percent of the families, however, responded "no" and another 34% reported that they didn't know.

Data were collected on the issue of why the families were watching the television program. Only 8% mentioned any education reason (see Table 31). Sixty-eight percent reported entertainment purposes for viewing the program, another 16% reported that viewing the television gave them something to do and another 8% of the families reported that they didn't know.

In the Anglo portion of the sub-sample, almost 9% reported an education reason for viewing the program, while 69% reported an entertainment purpose, 16% reported that viewing was "something to do" and 6% reported that they didn't know (see Table 32). Slightly more than 5% of the black families reported an education reason, while 79% reported entertainment, and 0% reported "something to do" reasons, and another 16% reported that they didn't know. Ten percent of the Mexican American families reported an education reason, while 50% reported an entertainment reason, 30% reported "something to do" as a reason, and 10% reported that they didn't know why they were watching the program.

In the urban sub-sample, 15% reported an educational reason, while 60% reported an entertainment reason, 12% reported it was "something to do" and another 12% of the families reported that they didn't know (see Table 33). Almost 6% of the suburban families reported an educational reason for viewing the program, while 69% reported an entertainment reason, 22% reported that watching the television gave them something to do and 4% reported that they didn't know why they were watching the television. Less than 4% of the urual families reported an education reason, while 77% reported an entertainment reason, 11% reported a something-to-do reason and another 8% didn't know.

In the two-parent family portion of the sub-sample, 8% reported an educational reason, while 68% reported an entertainment reason, 15% reported a something-to-do reason, and another 9% didn't know (see Table 34). Almost 11% of the single-parent families reported an education reason for viewing the program, while 65% reported an entertainment reason, 18% reported a something-to-do reason and 6% reported that they didn't know why the family

TABLE 32

Second Special Analysis*

Reason for Watching TV Program by Ethnicity

	Anglo	Percent of Sample	Black	Percent of Sample	Mexican American	Percent of Sample
Educational	7	8.6%	1	5.3%	2	10.0%
Entertainment	56	69.1%	15	78.9%	10	50.0%
Something To Do	13	16.1%	0	0%	6	30.0%
Don't Know	5	6.2%	3	15.8%	2	10.0%
Total	81	100.0%	19	100.0%	20	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 33

Second Special Analysis*

Reason for Watching TV Program by Housing

	Urban	Percent of Sample	Suburban	Percent of Sample	Rural	Percent of Sample
Educational	6	15.0%	3	5.9%	1	3.9%
Entertainment	24	60.0%	35	68.6%	20	76.9%
Something To Do	5	12.5%	11	21.6%	3	11.5%
Don't Know	5	12.5%	2	3.9%	2	7.7%
Total	40	100.0%	51	100.0%	26	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 34

Second Special Analysis*

Reason for Watching TV Program by Family Structure

	Two Parent	Percent of Sample	One Parent	Percent of Sample	Other	Percent of Sample
Educational	8	8.1%	2	11.8%	0	0%
Entertainment	67	67.7%	11	64.7%	5	83.3%
Something To Do	15	15.1%	3	17.6%	1	16.7%
Don't Know	9	9.1%	1	5.9%	0	0%
Total	99	100.0%	17	100.0%	6	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

was watching the television program.

Finally, each family was asked if they thought their child or children were learning something from the program being viewed. Almost 28% of the families responded "yes" and another 14% responded "maybe." However, the majority (52%) responded "no," while another 7% reported that they didn't know (see Table 35).

In the Anglo portion of the sub-sample, 27% and 17% responded "yes" and "maybe" respectively (see Table 36). Forty-nine percent responded "no" and 6% didn't know. More than 68% of black families reported "no," while 26% and 0% reported "yes" and "maybe" respectively, and another 5% reported that they didn't know. More than 47% of the Mexican American families reported "no" while 32% and 16% reported "yes" and "maybe" respectively, and another 5% reported that they didn't know.

In the urban portion of the sub-sample, 43% of the families reported "no," that they did not think their child or children were learning from the television program, while 30% and 16% reported "yes" and "maybe" respectively, and another 11% reported that they didn't know (see Table 37). More than 46% of the suburban families reported "no" while 37% and 15% reported "yes" and "maybe" respectively, and another 2% reported that they didn't know. More than 65% of the rural families reported that they did not think their child or children were learning from the program, while 12% reported "yes," another 12% reported "maybe" and another 12% reported that they didn't know.

In the two-parent family portion of the sub-sample, almost 52% of the families reported that they didn't think their child or children were learning from the program, while 26% and 14% reported "yes" and "maybe" respectively, and another 8% reported that they didn't know. Almost 59% of the single-parent

TABLE 35

Second Special Analysis*

Question 21: "Do You Think Your Children are Learning Something from the Program?"

Families	No. of Responses	Percent of Sample
Yes	34	27.9%
Maybe	17	13.9%
No	63	51.6%
Don't Know	8	6.6%
Total	122	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 36

Second Special Analysis*

Children Learning from TV Program by Ethnicity

	Anglo	Percent of Sample	Black	Percent of Sample	Mexican American	Percent of Sample
Yes	22	27.1%	5	26.3%	6	31.6%
Maybe	14	17.3%	0	0%	3	15.8%
No	40	49.4%	13	68.4%	9	47.4%
Don't Know	5	6.2%	1	5.3%	1	5.2%
Total	81	100.0%	19	100.0%	19	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

TABLE 37

Second Special Analysis*

Children Learning from TV Program by Housing

	Urban	Percent of Sample	Suburban	Percent of Sample	Rural	Percent of Sample
Yes	11	29.7%	20	37.0%	3	11.5%
Maybe	6	16.2%	8	14.8%	3	11.5%
No	16	43.3%	25	46.3%	17	65.5%
Don't Know	4	10.8%	1	1.9%	3	11.5%
Total	37	100.0%	54	100.0%	26	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

families reported "no" while 35% and 6% reported "yes" and "maybe" respectively, and none reported that they didn't know (see Table 38).

There were several important age difference. Families were grouped into five categories according to the age of the oldest child. Since data were collected from families instead of children, the data could not be segregated according to the age of particular children. Further, the age of the oldest child was considered to be an important family parameter. Fifteen percent of the families with children had an oldest child between the age of 0 years and 5 years old, 18% between 6 years and 9 years old, 30% between 10 years and 14 years old, and 31% between 15 and 17 years old. Family converstaions about television program content were more prevalent in families with an oldest child 6 to 9 years old (24%) and in families with an oldest child 10 to 14 years old (25%) than in families with an oldest child 0 to 9 years old (13%) and in families with an oldest child 15 to 17 years old (18%). Generally, as the age of the oldest child increased, it was more common for a child to select the television program being viewed, ranging from 7.5% in families with an oldest child 0 to 5 years old to 44.6% in families with an oldest child 15 to 17 years old.

On the critical issue of the reason for watching the television program being viewed, "entertainment" was the majority response in all family groups, followed by the response, "something to do". There were small fluctuations in the percent of families who were watching for educational reasons. Of families with an oldest child 0 to 5 years old, 9.0% were watching the TV program for educational purposes. In families with an oldest child 6 to 9 years old the rate increased to 12.5% and in families with an oldest child 10 to 14 years old, the rate was 12.8%. In families with an oldest child 15 to 17 years old, the rate dropped to 7.9%.

One the important theoretical issues is whether families plan their television viewing or simply watch whatever happens to be on. There was a slightly higher rate of planfulness of families' television viewing in families with an oldest child 6 to 9 years old (58%) and families with an oldest child 10 to 14 years old (59%), than in families with an oldest child 0 to 5 years old (48%) and in families with an oldest child 15 to 17 years old (55%). The greatest stability of family television viewing in terms of watching a program usually viewed by the family was found in families with an oldest child 10 to 14 years old.

Finally, the question of parents' perception of their children's learning from the television program being viewed yielded data similar to that solicited by other questions. Of families with an oldest child 0 to 5 years old, 13% thought their child or children were learning from the program being viewed. In families with an oldest child 6 to 9 years old, 29% thought their child or children were learning from the television program. In families 10 to 14 years old, the response rate was 27%. And in families with an oldest child 15 to 17 years old, 16% thought their child or children were learning from the television program being viewed.

TABLE 38

Second Special Analysis*

Children Learning from TV Program by Family Structure

	Two Parent	Percent of Sample	One Parent	Percent of Sample	Other	Percent of Sample
Yes	26	26.3%	6	35.3%	2	33.3%
Maybe	14	14.1%	1	5.9%	2	33.3%
No	51	51.5%	10	58.8%	2	33.4%
Don't Know	8	8,1%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	99	100.0%	17	100.0%	6	100.0%

*Sub-sample of families with at least one child 9 years old or younger watching television.

DISCUSSION

The sub-sample composed of families with a nine-year-old child or younger watching television generally appears to be a representative of the Southwest region with 66% Anglo, 15% black and 15% Mexican American families. The sub-sample also appears to be generally representative with regard to housing with 30% in an urban setting, 44% in a suburban setting and 21% in a rural setting. Further, the sub-sample appears to be representative with regard to family structure with 81% two-parent families, and almost 14% single-parent families.

Regarding the important issue of children's co-viewing, approximately half of the families reported a child viewing with his or her parent or parents. This is significant because it suggests that in almost half of the families with young children, the parents watch television with their children on a regular basis and thus there is at least the opportunity for parents to encourage discussion and analysis of television content. Unfortunately, almost another third of the families reported a child viewing television alone. This pattern was fairly consistent across Anglo, black and Mexican American families, except fewer Mexican American families reported a child viewing with his or her parent or parents. Suburban families reported the highest co-viewing with parents (55.5%) and also reported the highest viewing alone (37.0%). Unexpectedly, two-parent and single-parent families reported very similar rates of children viewing with their parent or parents (47.5% and 47.1% respectively).

Family conversations about television content are probably one of the most critical elements of children's television viewing experiences.

Generally, it was found that conversations during television viewing occurred only about one-third of the time. Further, only one-third of the conversations were about the television content. Thus, conversations about the television content being viewed appear to occur only about 10% of the time. Minority families appear to have fewer conversations, and even fewer conversations about the television content. Similarly, rural families appear to have fewer conversations in general and fewer conversations about the television content being viewed. While a similar percentage of two-parent and single-parent families reported conversations, single-parent families reported far fewer conversations about the television content. Generally, family conversation about television content being viewed is a rare event. The problem appears to be even more aggravated in minority and single-parent families.

Another indication of parents' involvement with their children's television viewing is who selected the television programs to be viewed. There appears to be an even split between parents and children, with 42.6% of the families reporting that a parent had selected the program and 43.4% of the families reporting that a child had selected the program. However, another 13.9% of the families reported that nobody had selected the program being viewed. Minority families reported a higher incidence of their children selecting the television program, black and Mexican American families reported 47% and 63% respectively. Further, children in urban settings were also more likely to select the program than a parent.

One of the most important elements to making television viewing beneficial, and perhaps also educational, is a person's viewing with a purpose, having planned to view the program. Much of people's television viewing is thought to be unplanned and to serve no purpose except to "kill" some time.

However, over half of the families (56.6%) reported that they had planned to view the program, and another 11% reported they had "sort of" planned to view the program. Nonetheless, almost one-third (29.5%) of the families reported that they had not planned to view the program. Unexpectedly, an overwhelming majority of black families (73.7%) reported that they had planned to view the program, while only 36.8% of the Mexican American families reported they had planned to view the program. A high proportion of rural families (69.2%) and single-parent families (70.6%) also unexpectedly reported that they had planned to view the program. A possible interpretation of some of these data is that for some families (especially rural and single-parent families) television is an integral part of family life and the family regularly views certain programs.

Indeed, the data generated by the question of whether the family usually watches the program being viewed appear to support the interpretation that rural and single-parent families regularly view specific programs. Almost 89% of the single-parent families reported that they regularly watch the program being viewed and 71% of rural families reported that they watch the program regularly. This is in comparison to a sample-wide rate of 62% regularly watching the program being viewed.

A second question was asked regarding conversations related to the content of television programs being viewed. Since conversations during television viewing are relatively rare, families were asked if there had been any comments or discussion about the television program since the television was turned on that evening. Only 20% of the families reported any television related conversations. The major exception was the rural families, none of whom reported any television related conversations. However, a follow-up question provided some encouraging data. Of the families who did report television related conversations, 68% reported that the conversation was between a parent and child. This is particularly significant because parental commentary and explanations greatly enhance a child's ability to understand and realistically interpret television content.

In another follow-up question, 23% of the families reported that the evening's conversations were not typical for the family when it is watching television. Another 34% reported that they didn't know. Almost 24% of the families reported that the conversations (or the lack of conversation) was typical for the family and another 20% of the families reported that sometimes their family had this kind of discussion while viewing television. All of this further suggests that parent-child interactions during television viewing are very irregular.

Undoubtedly the most discouraging finding of this study is that only 8% of the families reported an educational reason or purpose for viewing the television program. A full 68% reported entertainment reasons. Another 24% reported a something-to-do reason or that they didn't know why they were watching the program. This style of family viewing is directly opposite to the kind of family viewing that makes television a positive, beneficial experience for children.

The ultimate concern is whether or not children are learning from the television programs they view. This question was asked of the families who participated in the telephone-observation study. Generally, at least half of the families reported that they did not think their child or children were learning from the program being viewed. The most skeptical were rural families with 65% responding "no" and black families with 68% responding "no." The data, nonetheless, strongly suggest that most parents do not believe that their children learn from the television programs they view. Probably a more accurate perspective of these data is that most parents are unaware of what their children are learning from television programming.

CONCLUSIONS

The overwhelming finding of the study was that while most families (approximately 90%) view television regularly in the evening, family conversations while viewing occur less than one-third of the time. More importantly, discussions related to television occur approximately 10% of the time. Finally, only a small proportion of the television related discussions include any explanation or commentary of the television content. The bottom line is that meaningful family discussions about television content appear to occur only about 2.5% of families' viewing time.

The experimental evidence strongly suggests that children often learn and mislearn from television. Further, the evidence strongly suggests that family discussions greatly enhance the positive benefits of children's television viewing. The data generated by this study, however, indicate that such family discussions are rare events. Assuming a variance across families, it appears that in many families, explanatory or evaluative commentary about television programming content hardly ever occur.

In contrast to the empirical evidence, a minority of parents realize that their children are learning from the television programs they view. Approximately 20% of parents reported that they thought their children were learning and another 10% reported "maybe". A full 90% of the families reported watching a television program for entertainment, or something to do, or just didn't know why they were viewing.

The study provided several important insights into how families use home television, into parental involvement in their children's television viewing, and into families' educational use of home television. In general, it was found that in families with young children, parents viewed television with their children about half of the time during evening hours. However, family conversations about the television program occurred only about 10% of the time. Further, only about 8% of families with young children watched a television program for educational reasons, and more than half of the parents did not think their children learn from television programs.

It was hypothesized that family parameters would influence family use of television. Although there may be distortions in the data, the data do indicate that Mexican American parents view television with their children less frequently than do Anglo or Black parents. Further, family conversations while viewing television are much fewer in Mexican American families. There appear to be no substantial differences in the proportion of Anglo, Black and Mexican American families viewing television for educational purposes. Through, Black families were more skeptical that their children learn from television programs.

The general environment of the family appears to influence families' use of television. In particular, families in rural settings appear to be less likely to have family conversations about a television program and much less likely to watch television for educational purposes. Finally, fewer parents in rural families believe their children learn from television.

It was thought that the number of parents present in the family would greatly alter the family's use of home television; however, the data do not support this hypothesis. While single parents are much more likely to view television with their children, there are no dramatic differences between single-parent and two-parent families in the areas of family conversations while viewing television, reasons for watching television, or parental belief that their children learn from television.

The second hypothesis was that child parameters would affect television viewing behaviors. The data indicate that in families with high-school-age children, there is less frequent parent-child co-viewing of television, fewer family conversations about television programs, less frequent television viewing for educational purposes, and less belief that children learn from television programs than in families with grade-school-age children. The third hypothesis was that parental involvement would influence the educational benefits of children's television viewing. The data appear to indicate that in families where parents co-view with their children more frequently, there are more parent-child conversations about television programs, more television viewing for educational purposes, and a greater belief that children learn from television programs.

The overall picture of family television viewing, however, is that while television viewing is a dominant, if not almost constant, family activity for most families with children during most evenings, television viewing is not a joint activity in that family conversations about television are rare events; television viewing is not planned; program selection is not a family decision, and television viewing itself is an inexpensive and easy way to fill the evening hours. Further, the overwhelming proportion of parents do not believe that children learn from television.

A portrait of sharp contradictions is presented by the data. Television is a very pervasive element in the lives of American families. Virtually every family owns at least one working television. Parents deny any importance of television. Television is used for passing entertainment and assigned an insignificant status. However, when families are at home in the evening, the television is almost always turned on. Further, parents deny any impact of television on their children. The many research studies, nonetheless, continue to document more areas in which television shapes the knowledge, ideas, ideals and attitudes of children and adults. Finally the portrait is dominated by the scene of families silently, in isolation from other families, and family members in virtual silent isolation from each other, viewing television programs with passing interest. Television viewing is frequently interrupted to do family or personal chores. However, substantive interactions around the home television are indeed rare.

When television was first made available to families on a large scale, it was thought that television would bring families together. The available evidence does indicate that television has brought families together. However, television appears to exclude or discourage many of the family activities which are traditionally regarded as being important to a healthy, understanding and supportive family environment.

It should be recognized that the data were generated by the relatively novel and unvalidated technique of using the telephone to make "observations" into families' homes. This allowed an un-forwarned entrance into families' homes that appeared to be only mildly intrusive. In contrast to other observational approaches, the families did not "prepare" for the observation. The greatest area of concern is the use of the person answering the telephone to conduct and report the actual observations. The reliability of the observations appeared to be very high, and much higher than that of non-observational approaches. Generally, the validity appeared to be much higher than other observational approaches and the non-observational approaches because the technique is far less intrusive than the former approaches and obtains data more directly than the latter approaches. The major threat to the validity of the data generated would be the social desirability of response options. Since families were not given specific response options, the questions solicited detailed, factual information, and the questions were asked rather quickly, the responses to be spontaneous and truthful. With the approximate cost reduction of 90% in collecting factual data regarding family activities, the telephone observation approach makes it feasible to study families and their interactions.

Regarding the implications for parents and the development of programs to assist parents, the data are very discouraging. The major concern that parents are not involved in their children's television viewing is not only valid but even appears to have been understated. There are virtually no parental explanations of television content to children. This is in the context of television portraying very complex and confusing content. As to public policy supporting interventions and educational programs, these data document a strong need. At the same time, the data suggest that such programs would have great difficulty in having a substantial impact. Parents need to be more aware of how much television they and their children watch, and how much their children learn from and are influenced by television programming. Once parents are more aware, there a number of strategies which parents could use to make their children's television viewing positive and beneficial. There is already preliminary data that these strategies are effective.

The major problem remains that most parents are unaware and disbelieving of the impact of the nightly video visitor upon their family. If an intervention or educational program is to have any success, it will need to communicate information and raise awareness. Once parents have become aware, their concerns as parents will cause them to seek out and try ways to change, modify or eliminate the impact of television.

AVAILABILITY OF DATA

The data collected in the Fall pilot study and the Spring primary study are housed at the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. Access to these data may be arranged jointly through Dr. Oliver Moles at the National Institute of Education and Dr. Preston Kronkosky, the Executive Director of the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory.

The data are organized by groups of families as presented in the first table of Appendix B, "1981 Spring Survey, Final Summary".

REFERENCES

Abel, J., Fontes, B., Greenberg, B. and Atkin, C. "The Impact of Television on Children's Occupational Role Learning." (unpublished report), Michigan State University, East Lansing, 1980.

Atkin, C. K. *The effects of television advertising on children. Report No. 2: Second year experimental evidence*. East Lansing, Michigan State University, 1975. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 116 784)

Atkin, C. D. and Greenberg, B. S. "Parental Mediation of Children's Social Behavior Learning from Television." Michigan State University. Report to the U. S. Office of Child Development, HEW, Washington, D.C. August, 1977.

Applied Management Sciences, A survey of viewership of television series sponsored by ESAA legislation. Report prepared for Office of Education, DHEW, June 20, 1978.

Bailyn, L. Mass media and children: A study of exposure habits and cognitive effects. *Psychological Monographs*, 1959, *73* (1, Whole No. 471).

Barcus, F. E. Parental influence on children's television viewing. *Television Quarterly*, 1969, *8*, 63-73.

Beuf, A. "Doctor, Lawyer, Household Drudge." Journal of Communication, 1974, 24:2, 142-145.

Bechtel, R. B., Achelpohl, C., & Akers, R. Correlates between observed behavior and questionnaire responses on television viewing. In E. A. Rubinstein, G. A. Comstock, & F. P. Murray (Eds.), *Television and social behavior* (Vol. 4). *Television in day-to-day life: Patterns of use*. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1972.

Bogatz, G. and Ball, S. *The Second Year of Sesame Street: A Continuing Evaluation*. Princeton, Educational Testing Service, 1971.

Bower, R. T. *Television and the Public*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973.

Brady, G. H., Stoneman, Z. and Sanders, A. K. Effects of television viewing on family interactions: an observational study. *Family Relations*, 1980, *29*, 216-220.

Bryce, J. Family styles and television use. Paper presented at the Conference on Culture and Communication, Phila, Pa., April 1981.

Buerkel-Rothfuss, N. L. Children's family role learning from television: a focus on mediating variables. Doctoral dissertation submitted at Michigan State University, 1978.

Buerkel-Rothfuss, N., Greenberg, B., and Atkin, C. "Children's Family Role Learning from Television." (unpublished report), Michigan State University, East Lansing, 1980.

Buerkel-Rothfuss, N., Greenberg, B. S., and Neuendorf, K. (with C. Atkin, M. Hines and T. Stock). "Two Seasons of Family Role Interactions on Commercial Television." Michigan State University. Report to the U. S. Office of Child Development, HEW, Washington, D. C. March, 1978.

Chaffee, S. H. and McLeod, J. M. "Adolescent Television Use in the Family Context." In *Television and Social Behavior*, Reports and Papers, Vol. III: Television and Adolescent Aggressiveness. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1972.

Chaffee, S. A., McLeod, M. J. and Atkin, C. K. "Parental influences on adolescent media use." *American Behavioral Scientist*, 1971, *14*, 232-340.

Chaffee, S. H. and Tims, A. R. "Interpersonal Factors in Adolescent Television Use." *Journal of Social Issues*, 1976, *32*, 98-114.

Collins, W. A. Learning of media content: A developmental study. *Child Development*, 1970, *41* (4), 1133-1142.

Collins, W. A. *Developmental aspects of understanding and evaluating television content*. Paper presented at the bienniel meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Philadelphia, March, 1973.

Collins, W. A. Cognitive processing aspects of television viewing. In D. Pearl, L. Bouthilet & J. Lazar (Eds.), *Television and Behavior: Ten Years of Scientific Progress and Implications for the Eighties, Volume 2*, Washington, D. C.: DHHS, 1982.

Collins, W. A., & Westby, S. C. *Children's processing of social information from televised dramatic programs*. Paper presented at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Denver.

Corder-Bolz, C. Television content and children's social attitudes. Technical Report submitted to the Office of Child Development, DHEW, June 30, 1976.

Corder-Bolz, C. R. Mediation: The role of significant others. *Journal of Communication*, 1980, 30 (3), 106-118. (a)

Corder-Bolz, C. R. Critical television viewing skills for elementary schools. Television and Children, 1980, 3(2), 34-39. (b)

Corder-Bolz, C. R. TV literacy and critical TV viewing skills. In D. Pearl, L. Bouthilet & J. Lazar (Eds.), *Television and Behavior: Ten Years of Scientific Progress and Implications for the Eighties*, Volume 2, Washington, D. C.: DHHS, 1982.

Corder-Bolz, C. and Cox, C. L. The roles of television in adolescent sexual development. Paper presented at the 1981 Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Boston, Mass., April 2, 1981

Corder-Bolz, C. R. and Marshall, A. M. Family interaction and TV viewing. Paper presented at the 1980 Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Boston, April 8, 1980. (a)

Corder-Bolz, C. R. and Marshall, A. M. Parental attitudes towards television's influence on their children. Paper presented at the 1980 Biennial Meeting of the Southwestern Society for Research in Human Development, Lawrence, Kansas, March 29, 1980. (b)

Corder-Bolz, C. R., & O'Bryant, S. L. "Can people affect television: Teacher vs. program." Journal of Communication, 1978, 28, 97-103.

DeFleur, M. L. and DeFleur, L. B. "The Relative Contribution of Television as a Learning Source for Children's Occupational Knowledge." American Sociological Review, 1967, 32:777-789.

Dorr, A. "TV as a Teacher, Interpersonal Factors Mediating Viewing and Effects." Paper prepared for the National Institute of Education, April 1978.

Denzin, N. The Research Act: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods. Chicago: Ardine, 1970.

Frazer, F., and Reid, N. "A Sociological Study of Children's Use of Television Commercials to Initiate Social Interaction in Family Group Viewing Situation," paper presented to Advertising Division, Association for Education in Journalism Annual Convention, Seattle, WA August 1978. ERIC document 159-726.

Gerbner, G. and Signorielli, N. "Women and Minorities on Television" (unpublished report), Annenberg, School of Communication, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, 1979.

Greenberg, B. S. Television and role socialization. In D. Pearl, L. Bouthilet & J. Lazar (Eds.), Television and Behavior: Ten Years of Scientific Progress and Implications for the Eighties, Volume 2. Washington, D.C.: DHHS 1982.

Greenberg, B. S., Ericson, P. M., & Valkes, M. Children's television behaviors as perceived by mother and child. Michigan State University, East Lansing, College of Communication Arts, 1971. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 058 750)

Greenberg, B. S., Erikson, P. M. & Valkes, M. Children's television behavior as perceived by mother and child. In E. Rubenstein, G. Comstock, & J. Murray (Eds.), Television and social behavior (Vol. 4). Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1972.

Hardy, B. W. and Corder-Bolz, C. R. Family activity vs. TV viewing. The PTA Communicator, 1978, 56 (3), 6-7.

Hicks, D. J. Imitation and retention of film-mediated aggressive peer and adult models. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1965, 2 97-100.

Hines, M., Greenberg, B. and Buerkel, N. "An Analysis of Family Role Structures and Interactions in Commercial Television." Project CASTLE: (Report No. 6), Department of Communication, Michigan State University, East Lansing, 1977.

Jeffries-Fox, S. and Signorielli, N. "Television and Children's Conceptions of Occupations." Paper presented to the Airlie House Telecommunications Conference, Airlie House, Virginia, 1978.

Korzenny, F. and Neuendorf, K. Television Viewing and Self-Concept of the Elderly. Journal of Communication, 1980, 30:1, 71-80.

Lemon, J. Teaching children to become more critical consumers of television. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association, Washington, D. C., September 5, 1976.

LeRoy, D. Children's programs and AID analysis. Paper presented at meeting of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Arlington, Virginia, March, 1977.

Lo Sciuto, L. A. A National Inventory of TV viewing behavior. In E. A. Rubinstein, G. A. Comstock, & J. P. Murray (Eds.), Television and Social Behavior (Vol. 4). Television in Day-to-Day Life: Patterns of Use. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1972.

Lull, J. The social use of television. Human Communication Research, 1980, 6 (3), 197-209.

Lyle, J. Television in daily life: Patterns of use (overview). In E. A. Rubinstein, G. A. Comstock, & J. P. Murray (Eds.), Television and Social Behavior (Vol. 4). Television in Day-to-Day Life: Patterns of Use. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1972.

Lyle, J., & Hoffman, H. R. Explorations in patterns of television viewing by preschool-age children. In E. A. Rubinstein, G. A. Comstock, & J. P. Murray (Eds.), Television and Social Behavior (Vol. 4). Television in Day-to-Day Life: Patterns of Use. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1972.

Martin, C. A., & Benson, L. Parental perceptions of the role of television in parent-child interaction. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1970, 32, 410-414.

McGhee, P. "Television as a Source of Sex Role Stereotypes." Paper presented at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Denver, 1975.

Medrich, E. A. Constant television: a background to daily life. Journal of Communication, 1979, 29 (3), 171-176.

Meyer, T. P. Impact of "All in the Family" on children. Journal of Broadcasting, 1976, 20, 23-33.

Miller, M. M. and Reeves, B. "Linking Dramatic TV Content to Children's Occupational Sex Role Sterotypes." Journal of Broadcasting, 20: 35-50, 1976.

Mohr, P. J. *Television, children and parents*. Unpublished report, Department of Speech Communication, Wichita State University, 1978.

Murray, J. P. Television in inner-city homes: Viewing behavior of young boys. In E. A. Rubinstein, G. A. Comstock, & J. P. Murray (Eds.), *Television and Social Behavior* (Vol. 4). *Television in Day-to-Day Life: Patterns of Use*. Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1972.

Nielsen, A. C. *Nielsen Television 1977*, Northbrook, Illinois: A. C. Nielsen Company, 1977.

O'Bryant, S. L., & Corder-Bolz, C. R. *The effects of television on children's stereotyping of women's work roles*. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 1978, *12*, 233-244.

O'Bryant, S. L., & Corder-Bolz, C. R. Black children's learning of work roles from television commercials. *Psychological Reports*, 1978, *42*, 227-230. (b)

Postman, N. The first curriculum: comparing school and television. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 1979, November, 163-172.

Potler, R. L. New Season: *The Positive Use of Commercial Television with Children*. Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing, 1976.

Robertson, T. S., Rossiter, J. R., and Gleason, T. C. *Televised Medicine Advertising and Children*. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1980.

Rosenblatt, P. C., & Cunningham, M. R. Television watching and family tension. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 1976, *38* (1), 105-111.

Rossiter, J. R., & Robertson, T. S. Children's television viewing: An examination of parent-child consensus. *Sociometry*, 1975, 38, 308-326.

Roper Organization, Inc. "Changing Public Attitudes Toward Television and Other Mass Media: 1959-1976," New York: Television Information Office, 1977.

Safran, C. How TV changes children. *Redbook*, 1976 (November), 88, 91, 92, 95, 97.

Salomon, G. Internalization of filmic schematic operations in interaction with learners' aptitudes. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 1974, *66* (1), 499-511. (a)

Singer, J. L., & Singer, D. G. *Fostering imaginative play in pre-school children: Effects of television viewing and direct adult modeling*. A paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, New Orleans, August 1974. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 089 873)

Walling, J. I. The effect of parental interaction on learning from television. *Communication Education*, 1975, 25, 16-26.

Ward, S. Effects of Television Advertising on Children and Adolescents. In E. A. Rubinstein, G. A. Comstock, and J. P. Murray (Eds.), Television and Social Behavior (Vol. 4). Television in Day-to-Day Life: Patterns of Use. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1972.

Ward, S., Wackman, D. B., and Wartella, E. How Children Learn to Buy. Beverly Hills, Cal." Sage Publications, 1977.

Wartella, E. and Ettema, J. S. "A Cognitive Developmental Study of Children's Attention to Television Commercials." Communication Research 1(1), 1974, pp. 69-88.

Wartella, E. Children and television: the development of the child's understanding of the medium. Children's Report, Federal Communications Commission, Washington, D. C., 1979. Reprinted in Communication Yearbook, Vol. 1, Sage Publications, 1980.

Waters, H. Saving the family. Newsweek, May 15, 1978, 63-70.

Winn, M. The Plug-In Drug. New York: Viking Press, 1977.

APPENDIX A

Telephone Observation
and Questionnaire Forms

FAMILY LIFE AND TV TELEPHONE SURVEY

First Evening:
____ Completed
____ No answer
____ Busy
____ Parents not in, other

1. Interviewer ______
2. Interviewee name ______________ ______________ ______
   Phone number ______________ ______
3. Interviewee sex (1=male, 2=female) ______
4. Date (example: February 15 = 021581) ______
5. Time (example: 9:00 p.m. = 0900) ______
6. Address (as listed in phone book) ______________ ______
7. City ______________ ______
   State ______________ ______
8. Final status: 1=participates 2=no answer 3=refusal 4=wrong # ______

> Hello, my name is ______________ and I'm calling from Southwest Educational Laboratory in Austin, Texas. We are conducting a national telephone survey on family TV viewing and would like to ask you a few questions. Would that be all right? (1=y, 2=n which terminates interview) ______

9. Is your TV on? (1=yes, 2=no, 3=don't own a TV) ______
10. If TV is on, what program is on? ______________ ______
11. Was there anything said in the two minutes before the phone rang? (1=p 2=o 3=no) ______
    Program: ______________
    Other: ______________
12. How many children do you have living at home? ______ ______
    If no children or TV not on, say "Thanks, goodbye."
13. Who is watching at least part of the program?

H	W	C1	C2	C3	C4	O

14. Is anyone doing anything else?

	H	W	C1	C2	C3	C4	O
nothing							
reading							
eating							
grooming							
playing games							
handwork							
homework							
sleeping							
chores							
other							

15. Who selected the program?
    (1=father 2=mother 3=child 4-nobody) ______
15. Did you plan to watch the program? (1=yes 2=sort of 3=no) ______

17. Does your family usually watch this program? ______
(1=yes 2=sometimes 3=no 4=NA)

18. Have there been any comments or discussions about the TV program since the TV was turned on this evening? (1=yes 2=no 3=don't know) ______

If yes: Who was talking or listening in the discussion? ______
(1=p-p 2=p-c 3=c-c 4=0)

19. Is there usually this kind of discussion when your family views this program? (1=yes 2=sometimes 3=no) ______

20. Why is your family watching this program? ______
(1=educational 2=entertainment (like program) 3=babysitter
4=something to do 5=don't know)

21. Do you think your children are learning something from the program? ______
(1=yes 2=maybe 3=no)
What are they learning?______________________________

We would also like to ask a few demographic questions. These are just voluntary.

22. How many TVs are in your home? ______

23. What is your household structure? For example, 2 parents and 1 child ______

1=married, no children
2=married, children
3=single parent, children
4=single occupant
5=several adult same-sex
6=several adult mixed-sex
7=other (explain)______________

24.. And your children's sex and ages?
(1=b, 2=g, then age. Babies less than 6 mos=0,
greater than 6 mos=1

(sex)	(age)	
____	____	____
____	____	____
____	____	____
____	____	____

25. Do you live in an urban, suburban or rural neighborhood? ______
(1=urban 2=suburban 3=rural 4=don't know)

26. What is your ethnicity (or race)? ______
1=Anglo 2=Mexican-American 3=Black 4=Other

Thank you for helping us with our survey. We would also like to send you a more detailed questionnaire on your TV viewing habits, which would contain the same types of questions. In return for filling out the questionnaire, we will send you a free set of parenting materials which contain activities such as games and stories for you and your children. May we send you a questionnaire? (1=yes 2=no) ______

If yes, subject's correct address and zip code (explain subjects are obtained at random from the phone book):

____

____

____

Thank you.

FAMILY TV QUESTIONNAIRE

What is the age and sex of each family member?

	Age	Sex	
Husband	______		
Wife	______		
Oldest child	______	______	
Second child	______	______	
Third child	______	______	
Fourth child	______	______	
Other household members	______	______	Relationship____________________
	______	______	Relationship____________________

How many working televisions do you have? Color TVs______

Black & white TVs______

In which room is the TV that you most often watch together as a family?______________

Is cable service available in your area? Yes______No______

Is HBO? Yes______No______

Do you subscribe to cable service? Yes______No______

To HBO? Yes______No______

How many channels do you receive?____________________

Do you own a videotape recorder? Yes______No______

How many hours does your family watch TV in an average week?____________________

Which nights of the week are you as a family likely to be watching TV together?
(Please circle as many answers as apply to you.)

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday None regularly

Which word(s) of those below best describe how you feel about your children's TV viewing? (Please check as many as apply.)

Entertaining ______
Boring ______
Relaxing ______
A waste of time ______

Stimulating ______
Harmless ______
Worthwhile ______
Necessary ______

Harmful ______
Amusing ______
Stupid ______
Fulfilling ______

Please check off as many of the following statements as apply to your TV set's operation.

______ At my house, the TV is on most of the afternoon.
______ At my house, the TV is usually on during dinner.
______ At my house, the TV is on most of the evening.

What do you as a family talk about while you are watching TV? ______________________________

____

____

____

____

Do you and/or other members of your family often do anything other than talk while watching TV? (Mark as many as apply.)

______ Read
______ Eat
______ Personal grooming (self or others)

______ Play games
______ Do handwork (crafts, paperwork)
______ Do homework

______ Sleep
______ Household chores

______ Other (what?) ____

What shows do you as a family try to watch together whenever they are broadcast?

____________________ ____________________ ____________________

____________________ ____________________ ____________________

____________________ ____________________ ____________________

____________________ ____________________ ____________________

What programs (or types of programs) do you try to encourage your children to watch?

____

What programs (or types of programs) do you discourage or not allow your children to watch?

____

What programs (or types of programs) do you usually watch with your children?

____

What programs (or types of programs) are your children most likely to ask you questions about?

____

What programs (or types of programs) are most likely to lead to a family discussion?

Have any shows led to taking a trip or reading a book?

____yes, once or twice ____yes, 3 or 4 times ____yes, more than 4 times ____no, never

If yes, what shows?____

____

During 1 hour of evening TV programming, when you are watching with your children, how many discussions or comments are usually made about the show or commercials?

____0 ____1 ____2 ____3 ____4 ____5

On an average evening, what is the total amount of time your family spends talking together about the television programs being viewed?

____0 min. ____1-5 min. ____5-10 min. ____10-20 min. ____more than 20 min.

What programs do your children watch for educational purposes?________________________

____

What TV content do you try to explain to your children ________________________

____

Do you try to limit the amount of time your children watch TV?

____yes ____no ____not relevant

If yes, how many hours per day do you permit?

1st child____ 2nd child____ 3rd child____

If yes, how often is the limited TV viewing rule enforced?

____none ____rarely ____sometimes ____often ____always ____not applicable

How many hours did(do) your children watch TV:

		1st child	2nd child	3rd child
yesterday?	hours:	________	________	________
on an average weekday?	hours:	________	________	________
on an average Saturday?	hours:	________	________	________
on an average Sunday?	hours:	________	________	________

How many hours did(do) you and/or your spouse watch TV with your children:

yesterday? hours: ________
on an average weekday? hours: ________
on an average Saturday? hours: ________
on an average Sunday? hours: ________

Husband's occupation ______________________________ part-time_____ full time____

Wife's occupation ______________________________ part-time_____ full time____

Husband's highest year of school completed ______________________________

Wife's highest year of school completed ______________________________

Total family annual income: (check one)

____$0 - 10,000 ____$11,000 - 20,000 ____$21,000 - 30,000 ____$31,000 +

What clubs or organizations does each family member actively participate in?

Husband ______________________________
Wife ______________________________
Oldest child ______________________________
Second child ______________________________
Third child ______________________________
Other household members ______________________________

Please mark one of the following categories:

_____Both husband and wife completed questionnaire
_____Wife completed questionnaire
_____Husband completed questionnaire
_____Another household member completed questionnaire
Relationship______________________________

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP

APPENDIX B

1981 Spring Telephone Study Results

1981 Spring Survey, Final Summary

	No.	Percent	
No Answer	591	20.23%	
Disconnected	470	16.08%	
Refused	563	19.27%	
Participants	1,298	44.42%	
	2,922	100.00%	
Participants:			
Children, w/TV on	443	90.41%	
Children, TV off	44	8.98%	37.75%
Children, don't own TV	3	0.61%	
	490	100.00%	
No children, TV on	500	61.88%	
No children, TV off	283	35.02%	62.25%
No children, no TV	25	3.09%	
	808	100.00%	

Families with Children and with Television On by Ethnicity.

	Ethnicity	Percent of Sample
Anglo	289	65.2%
Black	55	12.4%
Mexican-American	62	14.0%
Other	21	4.7%
No Response	16	3.6%
	443	100.0%

Families with Children and with Television On by Housing.

	Housing Pattern	Percent of Sample
Urban	130	29.3%
Suburban	188	42.4%
Rural	77	17.4%
Other*	32	7.2%
No Response	16	3.6%
	443	100.0%

* Includes "don't know" answers.

Families with Children with Television On by Age of Oldest Child

0-5 Years	67	15.1%
6-9 Years	80	18.1%
10-14 Years	133	30.0%
15-17 Years	139	31.4%
No Response	24	5.4%
	443	100.0%

Families with Children with Television On -

by Family Structure.

	Family Structure	Percent of Sample
Married Parent Families	359	81.0%
Single Parent Families	51	11.5%
Other	17	3.8%
No Response	16	3.6%
	443	100.0%

Question 11:

"Did anyone say something in the two minutes before the phone rang?"

	Families with Children with Television ON	
Program	49	11.1%
Non-program	89	20.1%
No	305	68.8%
	443	100.0%

Program Comments in Two Minutes
Before Phone Rang.

	Program Comments	Percent
Explanatory	6	12.2%
Evaluative	6	12.2%
Other	37	75.5%
	49	100.0%

Program Comments in Two Minutes
Before Phone Rang by Ethnicity.

	Program Comment	Total Sample	Percent
Anglo	34	289	11.8%
Black	8	55	14.5%
Mexican-American	5	62	8.1%

Program Comments in Two Minutes

Before Phone Rang by Family Structure.

	Program Comment	Total Sample	Percent
Married	43	359	12.0%
Single Parent	4	51	7.8%
Other	1	17	5.9%

Program Comments in Two Minutes Before Phone Rang by Housing.

	Program Comments	Total Sample	Percent of Sample
Urban	18	130	13.8%
Suburban	25	188	13.3%
Rural	5	77	6.5%

Question 14:

"Are they doing anything else?"

Nothing	246	55.5%
Talking	3	0.7%
Reading	22	5.0%
Eating	48	10.8%
Grooming	5	1.1%
Playing Games	20	4.5%
Handwork	5	1.1%
Homework	24	5.4%
Sleeping	5	1.1%
Chores	26	5.9%
Other	28	6.3%
No Response	11	2.5%
	443	100.0%

Family Co-Viewing.

Child Alone	84	19.0%
Child w/Sibling(s)	44	9.9%
Child w/Adult(s)	143	32.3%
Adult(s) Only	156	35.2%
Other	4	0.9%
No Response	12	2.7%
	443	100.0%

Family Co-Viewing by Ethnicity.

	Anglo Co-viewing	% of Anglo Sample	Black Co-viewing	% of Black Sample	Mex-Amer. Co-viewing	% of Mex-Amer. Sample
Child Alone	57	19.7%	17	30.9%	7	11.3%
Child w/Sibling(s)	28	9.7%	7	12.7%	6	9.7%
Child w/Adult(s)	101	34.9%	15	27.3%	25	40.3%
Adult(s) Only	103	35.6%	16	29.1%	24	38.7%

Family Co-Viewing by Housing.

	Urban Co-viewing	% of Urban Sample	Suburban Co-viewing	% of Suburban Sample	Rural Co-viewing	% of Rural Sample
Child Alone	25	19.2%	41	21.8%	12	15.6%
Child w/Sibling(s)	14	10.8%	12	6.4%	13	16.9%
Child w/Adult(s)	43	33.1%	72	38.3%	22	28.6%
Adult(s) Only	48	36.9%	63	33.5%	30	38.9%

Family Co-Viewing by Family Structure.

	Married Co-viewing	Married Sample	Single Parent Co-viewing	% of Single Parent Sample	Other Co-viewing	% of Other Sample
Child Alone	68	18.9%	11	21.6%	5	29.4%
Child w/Sibling(s)	36	10.0%	7	13.7%	1	5.9%
Child w/Adult(s)	120	33.4%	19	37.3%	4	23.5%
Adult(s) Only	135	37.6%	14	27.4%	7	41.2%

Question 15: "Who Selected the Program?"

Father	79	17.8%
Mother	125	28.2%
Child	154	34.8%
Nobody	48	10.8%
Don't know	18	4.1%
No response	19	4.3%
	443	100.%

Who Selected Program by Age of Child

	0-5 Years	Percent of Sample	6-9 Years	Percent of Sample	10-14 Years	Percent of Sample	15-17 Years	Percent of Sample
Father	21	31.3%	15	18.8%	20	15.0%	29	20.9%
Mother	25	37.3%	30	37.5%	31	23.3%	34	24.5%
Child	5	7.5%	24	30.0%	60	45.1%	62	44.6%
Nobody	10	14.9%	10	12.5%	18	13.5%	9	6.5%
Don't Know	6	9.0%	1	1.3%	3	2.3%	5	3.6%

Who Selected the Program by Family Structure

	Two Parent	Percent of Sample	Single Parent	Percent of Sample	Other	Percent of Sample
Father	39	11.5%	7	13.7%	1	9.1%
Mother	126	37.2%	20	39.2%	4	36.4%
Child	102	30.1%	17	33.3%	6	54.5%
Nobody	72	21.2%	7	13.7%	0	0%

Who Selected the Program by Housing

	Urban	Percent of Sample	Suburban	Percent of Sample	Rural	Percent of Sample
Father	13	10.4%	25	13.9%	7	9.3%
Mother	49	39.2%	61	33.9%	33	44.0%
Child	36	28.8%	60	33.3%	21	28.0%
Nobody	27	21.6%	34	18.9%	14	18.7%

Who Selected the Program by Ethnicity

	Anglo	Percent of Sample	Black	Percent of Sample	Mex.-Am.	Percent of Sample
Father	33	12.1%	5	8.1%	7	13.5%
Mother	101	37.0%	25	40.3%	21	40.4%
Child	87	31.9%	19	30.6%	13	25.0%
Nobody	52	19.0%	13	21.0%	11	21.1%

Question 16: "Did You Plan to Watch This Program?"

Yes	233	52.6%
Sort of	31	7.0%
No	147	35.4%
No Response	22	5.0%
	443	100.0%

Planned to Watch Program by Age of Child

	0-5 Years	Percent of Sample	6-9 Years	Percent of Sample	10-14 Years	Percent of Sample	15-17 Years	Percent of Sample
Yes	32	47.8%	46	57.5%	78	58.6%	76	54.7%
Sort of	5	7.5%	7	8.8%	7	5.3%	12	8.6%
No	29	43.3%	26	32.5%	48	36.1%	50	36.0%

Planned to Watch Program by Family Structure

	Two Parent	Percent of Sample	Single Parent	Percent of Sample	Other	Percent of Sample
Yes	188	53.0%	32	64.0%	10	90.9%
Sort of	28	7.9%	3	6.0%	0	0%
No	139	36.3%	15	30.0%	1	9.1%

Planned to Watch Program by Housing

	Urban	Percent of Sample	Suburban	Percent of Sample	Rural	Percent of Sample
Yes	75	58.1%	95	50.5%	48	61.5%
Sort of	7	5.4%	13	6.9%	7	9.0%
No	47	36.4%	80	42.6%	23	29.5%

Planned to Watch Program by Ethnicity

	Anglo	Percent of Sample	Black	Percent of Sample	Mex.-Am.	Percent of Sample
Yes	150	52.6%	44	69.8%	29	53.7%
Sort of	25	8.8%	4	6.3%	2	3.7%
No	110	38.6%	15	23.8%	23	42.6%

Question 18: "Have there been any comments or discussions about the TV program since the TV was turned on this evening?"

Yes	88	19.9%
No	312	70.4%
Don't Know	23	5.2%
No Response	20	4.5%
	443	100.0%

Question 18a: "If yes, who was talking or listening in the discussion?"

Parent/parent	24	27.6%
Parent/child	39	44.8%
Child/child	11	12.6%
Other	13	14.9%
	87	100.0%

Family Comments about TV Program by Age of Child

	0-5 Years	Percent of Sample	6-9 Years	Percent of Sample	10-14 Years	Percent of Sample	15-17 Years	Percent of Sample
Yes	9	13.4%	19	23.8%	33	24.8%	25	18.0%
No	56	83.6%	56	70.0%	86	64.7%	109	78.4%
Don't Know	1	1.5%	4	5.0%	10	7.5%	3	2.2%

Family Discussions about TV by Ethnicity

	Anglo	Percent of Sample	Black	Percent of Sample	Mex.-Am.	Percent of Sample
Discussion Reported	63	22.0%	11	17.5%	10	18.2%
No Discussion Reported	211	73.5%	47	74.6%	41	74.5%
Don't Know	13	4.5%	5	7.9%	4	7.3%

Family Discussions about TV by Family Structure

	Two Parent	Percent of Sample	Single Parent	Percent of Sample	Other	Percent of Sample
Discussion Reported	72	20.2%	13	25.5%	2	18.2%
No Discussion Reported	167	74.8%	33	64.7%	9	81.8%
Don't Know	18	5.0%	5	9.8%	0	0%

Family Discussion about TV by Housing

	Urban	Percent of Sample	Suburban	Percent of Sample	Rural	Percent of Sample
Discussion Reported	32	24.4%	42	22.2%	10	12.8%
No Discussion Reported	93	71.0%	136	72.0%	61	78.2%
Don't Know	6	4.6%	11	5.8%	7	9.0%

Question 19: "Is there usually discussion when your family views this program?"

	Yes	Sometimes	No	Don't Know	No Response
Discussion Reported	60 (67.4%)	13 (14.6%)	13 (14.6%)	1 (1.1%)	2 (2.2%)
No Discussion Reported	46 (14.7%)	57 (18.3%)	88 (28.2%)	10 (3.2%)	111 (35.6%)

Question 20: "Why is your family watching this program?"

Educational	43	9.7%
Entertainment	254	57.3%
Babysitter	1	0.2%
Something To Do	82	18.5%
Don't Know	40	9.0%
No Response	23	5.2%
	443	100.0%

Reason for Family Watching Program by Age of Child

	0-5 Years	Percent of Sample	6-9 Years	Percent of Sample	10-14 Years	Percent of Sample	15-17 Years	Percent of Sample
Educational	6	9.0%	10	12.5%	17	12.8%	11	7.9%
Entertainment	36	53.7%	52	65.0%	77	57.9%	85	61.2%
Babysitter	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Something To Do	14	20.9%	11	13.8%	26	19.5%	28	20.1%
Don't Know	8	11.9%	5	6.3%	12	9.0%	14	10.1%

Reasons for Watching Program by Family Structure

	Two Parent	Percent of Sample	Single Parent	Percent of Sample	Other	Percent of Sample
Educational	57	15.3%	5	9.8%	1	9.1%
Entertainment	213	57.1%	29	56.9%	10	90.9%
Something To Do	70	18.8%	10	19.6%	0	0%
Don't Know	33	8.8%	7	13.7%	0	0%

Reasons for Watching Program by Ethnicity

	Anglo	Percent of Sample	Black	Percent of Sample	Mex.-Am.	Percent of Sample
Educational	31	11.0%	7	10.4%	2	4.0%
Entertainment	159	56.6%	50	74.6%	32	64.0%
Something To Do	63	22.4%	4	6.0%	11	22.0%
Don't Know	28	10.0%	6	9.0%	5	10.0%

Reasons for Watching Program by Housing

	Urban	Percent of Sample	Suburban	Percent of Sample	Rural	Percent of Sample
Educational	21	15.7%	17	9.2%	4	5.3%
Entertainment	75	56.0%	111	60.3%	53	70.7%
Something To Do	23	17.2%	42	22.8%	11	14.7%
Don't Know	15	11.2%	14	7.6%	7	9.3%

Question 21: "Do you think your children are learning something from the program?"

Yes	92	20.8%
Maybe	50	11.3%
No	239	54.0%
Don't know	26	5.9%
No response	36	8.1%
	443	100.0%

Children Learning from Program by Age of Child

	0-5 Years	Percent of Sample	6-9 Years	Percent of Sample	10-14 Years	Percent of Sample	15-17 Years	Percent of Sample
Yes	9	13.4%	23	28.8%	36	27.1%	22	15.8%
Maybe	3	4.5%	8	10.0%	20	15.0%	18	12.9%
No	44	65.7%	45	56.3%	61	45.9%	90	64.7%
Don't Know	6	8.9%	2	2.5%	11	8.3%	6	4.3%

Children Learning from Program by Family Structure

	Two Parent	Percent of Sample	Single Parent	Percent of Sample	Other	Percent of Sample
Yes	75	21.9%	12	23.5%	4	40.0%
Maybe	45	13.2%	3	5.9%	1	10.0%
No	200	58.5%	33	64.7%	4	40.0%
Don't know	22	6.4%	3	5.9%	1	10.0%

Children Learning from Program by Housing

	Urban	Percent of Sample	Suburban	Percent of Sample	Rural	Percent of Sample
Yes	28	23.0%	46	25.1%	14	18.2%
Maybe	17	13.9%	23	12.6%	8	10.4%
No	69	56.6%	106	57.9%	49	63.6%
Don't Know	8	6.6%	8	4.4%	6	7.8%

Children Learning from Program by Ethnicity

	Anglo	Percent of Sample	Black	Percent of Sample	Mex.-Am.	Percent of Sample
Yes	59	21.3%	17	27.0%	14	25.9%
Maybe	39	14.1%	3	4.8%	7	13.0%
No	161	58.1%	41	65.1%	29	53.7%
Don't Know	18	6.5%	2	31.7%	4	7.4%

Children Learning from Program with Family Discussion

	Family Discussion Reported	Percent of Sample	No Family Discussion Reported	Percent of Sample
Yes	29	34.9%	53	18.0%
Maybe	18	21.7%	30	10.2%
No	36	43.4%	193	65.4%
Don't Know	0	0%	19	6.4%

Question 17: "Does your family usually watch this program?"

Yes	188	42.4%
Sometimes	53	12.0%
No	122	27.5%
Don't Know	10	2.3%
No Response	70	15.8%
	443	100.0%

Family Usually Watches Program by Age of Child

	0-5 Years	Percent of Sample	6-9 Years	Percent of Sample	10-14 Years	Percent of Sample	15-17 Years	Percent of Sample
Yes	30	44.8%	44	55.0%	52	39.1%	67	48.2%
Sometimes	12	17.9%	6	7.5%	17	12.8%	16	11.5%
No	20	29.9%	22	27.5%	43	32.3%	45	32.4%
Don't Know	0	0%	1	1.3%	3	2.2%	3	2.2%
No Response	4	5.9%	7	8.8%	17	12.8%	8	5.8%

Children Learning from Program by Program Usually Watched

Children Learning	Family Usually Watches Program			
	Yes	Sometimes	No	Don't Know
Yes	57	7	19	0
Maybe	26	7	10	1
No	96	34	89	3
Don't Know	9	5	4	6

APPENDIX C

First Special Analysis Tables

Special Analysis of Who Selected Program*

Parent	84	35.4%
Child	122	51.5%
Other	23	9.7%
Don't Know	8	3.4%
	237	100.0%

* Sub-sample of families with at least one child 14 years old or younger and child watching television

Special Analysis of Planning to Watch Program*

Yes, planned to watch program	138	58.2%
Sort of planned to watch program	19	8.0%
No, did not plan to watch program	77	32.5%
No Answer	3	1.3%
	237	100.0%

* Sub-sample of families with at least one child 14 years old or younger and child watching television

Special Analysis of Family Usually Watches Program*

Yes	123	51.9%
Sometimes	25	10.5%
No	64	27.0%
Not Applicable	21	8.9%
Don't Know	4	1.7%
	237	100.0%

* Sub-sample of families with at least one child 14 years old or younger and child watching television

Special Analysis of Family Discussion about TV Program*

Comments about Program	56	23.6%
No Comments about Program	168	70.9%
Don't Know	11	4.6%
No Answer	2	0.8%
	237	100.0%

* Sub-sample of families with at least one child 14 years old or younger and child watching television

Special Analysis of Family Discussion about TV Program*

Parent/Parent	5	8.9%
Parent/Child	37	66.1%
Child/Child	9	16.1%
Other	2	3.6%
No Answer	3	5.4%
	56	100.0%

* Sub-sample of families with at least one child 14 years old or younger and child watching television

Special Analysis of Why Families Watch Program*

Educational	25	10.5%
Entertainment	154	63.7%
Babysitter	0	0
Something to do	35	14.8%
Don't know	22	9.3%
No Answer	1	0.4%
	237	100.0%

* Sub-sample of families with at least one child 14 years old or younger and child watching television

Special Analysis of Children Learning from TV Program*

Yes	65	27.4%
Maybe	37	16.0%
No	117	49.4%
Don't Know	16	6.8%
No Answer	1	0.4%
	237	100.0%

* Sub-sample of families with at least one child 14 years old or younger and child watching television